

The author speaks with obvious honesty and gives us some home truths, something that we all need to accept. The best way to read this book is from page one to the end.

— **Vikram Sood**, former chief of Research & Analysis Wing

# Jihadist

## Threat To India

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The Case For Islamic Reformation  
By An Indian Muslim

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**TUFAIL AHMAD**

Most authors argue that the lack of education among Muslims leads to Islamic extremism, but this book leads the reader into evolving an understanding that 'education' – the failings of the education system – is one of the factors that leads to modern-day jihadism. It offers a profound understanding of jihadist organisations based in Pakistan and how the Pakistani state's support to these organisations perennially undermines peace in Afghanistan and India.

The reader comes to grasp that the Arab Spring failed because of the absence of an infrastructure of liberal ideas in Muslim societies, which also means that jihadist organisations such as the Islamic State (ISIS) find a ready audience in countries from India to the Middle East thanks to the presence of an infrastructure of ideas supportive of everyday Islamism in their society.

Unlike some writers who argue that reform among Muslims must come from within, a number of essays and research papers in this book stress that social change essentially comes from being open to and interacting with foreign ideas too. At a time when support to the ISIS is growing among Indian Muslims, this book will emerge as the basic text to understanding Islamic radicalisation.

While this book is relevant for Indian military officials and intelligence analysts, the author's columns reproduced from Indian newspapers posit the idea that Indian democracy has emerged as the best living space for Muslims in modern times and that there is absolutely no Muslim country which can match the vast economic and educational opportunities and religious and political freedom that India offers to Muslims.

# Jihadist Threat to India



# **JIHADIST THREAT TO INDIA**

The Case for Islamic Reformation  
By An Indian Muslim

SELECTED WRITINGS  
**TUFAIL AHMAD**



INFOLIMNER

Cover Page by Naleen Kumar. AK-47 is the most used weapon in the hand of jihadist organisations worldwide.

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*For*  
*Alvira Moledina Ahmad*  
*and her friend Hili Carmon*





# Contents

Foreword by Vikram Sood ix

Author's Introduction xiii

## **SECTION I: The Rise of the Indian Republic**

1. The Maturing of the Republic	3
2. The Radiance of Indian Democracy	6
3. India is a Western Country	9
4. A New Breed of Indians	12
5. Narendra Modi – Herald of a New India	15
6. Pakistani Slugfest over Shahrukh Khan	18
7. Magna Carta and the Masses of India	21

## **SECTION II: Al-Qaeda Threat to India**

1. Al-Qaeda's Indian Frustrations	27
2. Al-Qaeda's Indian Strategy	30
3. Tracing Al-Qaeda's Ideology	33
4. Afghan Taliban's Shadow Over India	36
5. Al-Qaeda in Pakistan	39
6. The Message from Burdwan	42
7. Similarities Between 9/11 and 26/11 Attacks	45
8. The Ghost of Osama bin Laden	48
9. Al-Qaeda's Strategy for South Asia	56

## **SECTION III: Radicalisation Among Indian Muslims**

1. Threat to Indian Muslims	69
2. India Must Confront Jihadism at Home	72
3. Debate Radicalisation Transparently	75
4. Charlie Hebdo Attackers Find Indian Supporters	78
5. India Needs a Counter-Radicalisation Law	81
6. The Rise of Ideological Jihadists in India	84
7. Combating Radicalisation in Free Societies	95
8. ISIS Spreads Its Tentacles in a Dozen Indian States	99

## **SECTION IV: The Roots Of Pakistani Jihadism**

1. The Ideology of Pakistan in Conflict	109
2. The Islamism of Muhammad Iqbal	114
3. Jinnah And the Genie of Islamism	117
4. Pakistani Textbooks Teaching Jihad	120
5. Pakistan's Jewish Problem	130
6. Soldier-Jihadism in Pakistan	154
7. Balochistan under Pakistan Military Boot	157
8. Maulana Azad's Forecasts for Pakistan	160

**SECTION V: The Pakistan Threat**

1. India Under Pakistani Intelligence Assault	165
2. Saudi-Pakistan Role in the Maldives	168
3. The Saudi-Pakistan Threat to India	171
4. The Next Decade of Jihadism in Pakistan	174
5. Why India Should Freeze Relations With Pakistan	190
6. Pakistan's Deadly Double Game	193
7. Pakistan's Continuing War Against Indian Civilisation	200
8. Question America's Pakistan Policy	203

**SECTION VI: Muslims in Indian Democracy**

1. Urdu Media Fanning Minority Fears	209
2. Articles of Faith or Apologia for Jihad?	212
3. Beyond the Muslim Quota	229
4. Shut Down Darul Uloom Deoband	232
5. The Role of Jamaat-e-Islami	235
6. Historical Separatism Among Indian Muslims	238
7. Madrassas Recycling Muslim Decadence	241
8. In Defence of Maulana Mahmood Madani	244
9. Asaduddin Owaisi – The Jinnah of Modern India	247

**SECTION VII: The Case for Islamic Reformation**

1. End the Hereditary Imamate of Delhi	253
2. Sir Syed's Message of Reform Lost	257
3. Muslim Children of 6-14 Must Be in School, Not in Madrassa	260
4. Banish Religion from India's Politics	263
5. South Asian Secularism Leads to Islamism	266
6. Islamic Reformation in India	269
7. The Case for Reform of Islam in India	272
8. In Defence of Free Speech	276

**SECTION VIII: Combating Global Jihadism**

1. The Rise of Islamism in the World	281
2. The Phenomenon of Hindu Terrorism	284
3. Liberty in Peril in Bangladesh	291
4. Afghanistan After US Troops Withdrawal	294
5. Threats to Britain's Open Society	297
6. Boycott Saudi Arabia's Apartheid State	300
7. Erdoganism Leading to Jihadism in Turkey	303
8. Syrian Jihadi Blowback in European Societies	306
9. Hatred of Jews in Europe, And Our Own	309
10. United States's Counterterrorism Policies	312
11. Muslim Liberals Fighting Battle of Ideas with ISIS	315
12. Lone-Wolf Attacks in British Colonial India	318
13. How to Combat Global Islamism	344

# Foreword

**I**t is now a little over four years since Osama bin Laden was killed but al-Qaeda remains a potent threat to the world despite claims that the organisation has degraded. At the same time, a far more vicious and brutal terrorist machine, the Islamic State (ISIS), now functions in the heart of Arabia. Nurtured by the Saudis and Qatar, the ISIS was originally meant to counter the growing Iranian influence. Since last year, the ISIS has been dramatically challenging al-Qaeda from Morocco to Pakistan and threatening to spread its influence outwards into Central Asia and into Africa.

There are two epicentres of terrorism today. The one in the AfPak region is a byproduct of the Cold War and Pakistani dreams, from where terrorism has long flowed in all directions reaching as far as the United States and Europe. While the “global war on terror” may have subdued some aspects of this, it remains very much an epicentre of terrorism. The second has been in West Asia (the Middle East) in various forms over decades and is now in its latest and most virulent form. State sponsorship of international terrorism was first invoked as a strategic weapon to defeat a strong opponent through asymmetric warfare in the 1980s in Afghanistan. It has become fashionable since then as a force equaliser in some cases (against India) or force multiplier against others (in the Arab world).

Terrorism is the enhanced strategic threat since 2001. There is more of every aspect of terrorism – more states are affected and more states are directly or indirectly involved in supporting or sustaining terrorist activities. There are far more terrorists, with capable terrorist groups, and the threat itself has become multidimensional. The task of tackling this menace has become even more difficult than in the past. It is

obvious to all of us that the Muslim world is in ferment. In West Asia, religious schisms, regional fears and global ambitions interact in the most complicated and contradictory ways. This makes counterterror efforts selective and intricate.

While the brutality of the ISIS variety is particularly frightening, there are two factors that cause greater concern. One, the deliberate use of certain Quranic verses by the ISIS to justify its brutality, which is accepted by sections of the population and frightens others, especially non-Muslims whose knowledge about Islam is bound to be inadequate. The second is that we often make the mistake of assuming that others see themselves as we see them. While the rest of us assume that everyone considers that the ISIS is evil incarnate, there are others who assume otherwise.

For us in India we have the problem that confirmed terrorist organisations like Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan plan Ghazwa-e-Hind and dream of establishing three caliphates in India. This fits admirably with the dreams of the military mindset that seeks equality with India through confrontation. Pakistani terror outfits dreamt of caliphates in India decades before Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced his caliphate in Iraq in 2014.

Tolerance is at a dangerously low ebb in all our societies. We see signs of this in Europe and America as well. Political correctness has been carried to absurd limits and we are not able to describe what is happening in West Asia as acts of intolerance, brutality and violence perpetrated by some Muslims in the name of Islam. The unwillingness of political leaders and society to truthfully and accurately describe such atrocities as the handiwork of Muslim extremists only hurts the interests of the moderates. It is this section of society that seeks international support to be able to stand up to this brutality in the name of Islam as these extremists chase their Apocalypse. While many would reject the vision of the Islamic State, the fact was that this entity and al-Qaeda and various Islamic groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba have drawn on the scholarship of Ibn Taymiyyah in the 14th century to Sayyid Qutb in the 20th century whom many Muslims considered as “religious leaders”.

It was clear in the 1990s that the Pakistan military establishment was replicating its Afghan experience in India. And today it seeks to replicate its Indian experience in Afghanistan. Jihadi foot soldiers get redeployed on the basis of the military establishment's threat perceptions. In the process it seeks continued international relevance for itself through continued delinquency. And that it was a matter of

time that the movement would become Islamic with extensive Pakistani patronage.

For a country as diverse as ours the state has to be secular and demonstrably equidistant from religion without being irreligious. For this it has to ensure the rule of law and that the people remain tolerant. All of us have to accept that a nation draws its core ethos from the majority which has to be particularly democratic and tolerant of others. Emancipation does not lie in promoting sectional interests, ghettoisation of communities through quotas or encouraging the victimhood complex. One sense of discrimination must not be replaced by another.

Tufail Ahmad is a serious analyst. He has written extensively on jihad and extremism. His book *Jihadist Threat to India – The Case for Islamic Reformation By An Indian Muslim* is of extreme relevance to us not only in the context of our neighbourhood, the unchanging attitude in Pakistan of harbouring and using elements that are now a threat to its own existence, but because of the growing Islamist threat globally. The author takes the reader beyond and behind the headlines. He warns of the dangers of making wrong assumptions about the dangers from outside and from within when we allow one extremism to flourish in the name of secularism and get another extremism in return.

It is an important book that should be read by not only those on the extreme, both the political Right and the Left, and regardless of religious beliefs. The author speaks with obvious honesty and gives us some home truths, something that we all need to accept. We need to look at ourselves in the mirror, first about ourselves and then look outside and see how these dangers are being foisted upon us and how if we are not careful and alert they have the danger of overrunning us.

The best way to read this book is from page one to the end.

**Vikram Sood**

Former chief, Research & Analysis Wing



# Author's Introduction

**I**n the agricultural plains north of the Ganges in Bihar's Champaran region, where George Orwell was born and Valmiki wrote the Sanskrit epic Ramayana, I began my schooling at a madrasa from where I would go on to study and work in New Delhi, London and Washington, D.C. After high school, the first stop was at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) to do sociology. In the late 1980s, one summer afternoon during my annual holidays, my youngest sister asked me, "Bhai, can we dance at your wedding?"

The question took me by surprise. In the society I was born and bred, when the groom's party left for the bride's village, women always danced within the four walls of the house, but someone or something was preventing my sister from even thinking that she could dance. That set me thinking. The visible signs were everywhere: Islamic clerics were teaching that women should not sing or dance and that their voice should remain within the four walls of a home. Islam was curtailing my sister's freedom, crippling her ability to sing and to dance, or even preventing her from thinking about such a thing.

An incident on June 26, 1992, when I was a first-year student of LLB at AMU, brought me face with the overbearing influence of religious regulations and dogmatism in society. I was also the editor of *Mohsin '92*, the annual hostel magazine. On that day, as I returned to Amin Hostel at the university after an early breakfast, I was surrounded by a group of angry hostellers at the main gate. The trigger was a letter I had written to the Editor that appeared in *The Times of India* that morning. It was almost impossible for me to talk about the ban of Salman Rushdie's book with my friends, and in my letter I was wondering aloud as to who will decide for me whether or not I should

read *The Satanic Verses*. I heard angry voices all around me: “Why did you write?”, “Why didn’t you change your name to that of a Hindu?”, “Why did you mention Aligarh?”, and then came shouts of “Beat him up”. I was petrified. The letter was my only outlet for self-expression at a time when all around me I felt suffocated.

Someone informed my friend Syed Khurshid Raza, who had just woken up and came rushing to my aid. In a remarkable expression of courage, he told the crowd: “If anything happens to him, you better be warned.” I was saved for the moment and went to my room. It was a Friday. Student union elections were round the corner. After the weekly prayers, a friend who knew my caste came running to warn me: They are holding a meeting against you, take your documents and clothes and leave.

For the next few days, I lived in hiding at my friend Yahya Khan’s room in another hostel before moving to New Delhi. Since I was not a known face, it was easy to hide. Later, my friend Naushad Ali, a brawny type, picked up my stuff from the hostel room. Perhaps, it was meant to turn out this way. I had applied for MA in Social Systems at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and got an admission offer, along with a National Merit Scholarship.

Over the course of my life, I have taken extensive formal and informal courses in Islamic studies, sociology and war studies. At the Madrasa Ashrafia Shahidia seminary in my village, I do not remember any cleric teaching me hatred against any community. One teacher I fondly remember is Hafiz Abul Khair who taught me my first alphabets. On the AMU campus, I was briefly charmed by sexy posters of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), now a banned jihadist group, and on the JNU campus by the romanticism of the Left. I would ultimately shed off these influences as I evolved my own commitment to people rather than for religions and ideologies. On the JNU campus, each time I walked up to the Jawahar Book Depot, I felt out of place: books were the piano my fingers longed to touch and possess but I had no money, a scarcity that was removed when the BBC took me to London for its Urdu Service.

On July 26, 2001, I boarded a flight for London but could not catch the connecting flight from Dubai, which got cancelled because of a terror attack in Colombo. I arrived in London the next day, a few weeks before the 9/11 attacks. At the BBC Urdu Service, I was fortunate to meet lots of journalists from Pakistan: it was a generation that had grown up in the years of dictatorship when there was no vibrant television and Internet media as it is today. During my conversations with Pakistani



friends, the first thing that struck me was that the understanding of Pakistan advocated in India was comprehensively flawed and those who portrayed a fairly true picture of Pakistan were dismissed as right-wing Hindus. The post-9/11 hate against Pakistanis in the West further complicated the understanding of Pakistan.

One day my colleague Umer Afridi suggested that we do a joint radio programme. He asked me to script what Indian schools taught about Pakistan and that he would write about what Pakistani children were taught about India in their textbooks. I turned to him, "Afridi sahab, I don't know what is taught in Pakistani schools. But forget about schools in India, even Indian madrassas do not teach anything about Pakistan." Although the BBC had brought me to write and broadcast about India, the turn of events after 9/11 enhanced my understanding of Pakistan, especially about jihadist organisations nurtured by the Pakistani state.

One afternoon, as the Day Editor responsible for all online output for BBCUrdu.com, I was handed over by my colleague Sajid Iqbal an anonymous online diary he had just edited. In my capacity as Senior Interactive Producer, I had been responsible for setting up the BBC's Your Voice project in Urdu and we encouraged readers to write, the idea being to help them to drive the global news agenda from below. To be sure that the diary was authentic, I asked Sajid if it could have been planted. He clarified that Abdul Hai Kakar, our colleague in Peshawar who was known for his integrity, had recorded the diary from a student. I pressed the publish button and a few years later Malala Yousafzai would be shot in the head for that diary. At the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), my colleague Yigal Carmon often reminds me this: write but do not prepare your own funeral.

A few weeks after 9/11, on a Sunday noon, I walked up to the Ilford town centre in east London. A few Muslim youths were distributing Islamic literature. I asked a teenager: "Where are you from?" He said, my parents are from Pakistan. I gave him a test question: "What if a Muslim was critical of the Prophet Muhammad?" He would be killed, he replied instantly. I wasn't surprised by his answer. That is the understanding Muslim children grow up with even in India. What took me by surprise was that he was just 14. I remember my post-9/11 days in London also for the fact that it was intellectually isolating. Good people were supporting the jihadists. London was a poisoned moral universe in which my leftist Hindu friends at the BBC Hindi rejoiced each time there was a suicide bombing in Baghdad.

Sometime in 2004 I met MEMRI's founder Yigal Carmon who was visiting London. At that time, I was working full time and was also enrolled for a full-time MA in War Studies at King's College London. A few years later, Yigal asked me to begin a small project to translate content from Urdu and Pashtu languages for memri.org, which has now become the world's greatest online resource on the jihadist movements of South Asia. Being a subject matter expert affords liberty to write and publish. At MEMRI, I got full freedom to decide what to publish. Yigal is of Sufi attributes, preferring to travel economy than business class and – much like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan who literally begged to launch the Aligarh Muslim University – he travels only to seek donations, with the singular aim of bringing Islamic reformist writers from across the world together on a single platform. In my job, one of the difficulties I regularly faced was where to find reformers. This gets more complicated because all Islamist movements call themselves reformist.

One of the reasons the Arab Spring failed was because there was no infrastructure of liberal ideas in Middle Eastern societies. This also means that the jihadist movements like the Islamic State (ISIS) are finding willing sympathisers thanks to the existing infrastructure of ideas in Muslim societies which is generally supportive of everyday Islamism and its militant cousin, jihadism. India, a vibrant democracy, faces a unique challenge because most of the leading Islamist movements such as the Tablighi Jamaat, the Darul Uloom Deoband network, Jamaat-e-Islami, the Ahmadiyya movement and Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind have their origins and headquarters in India. In their conversations and preaching, all these organisations present themselves as fountainheads of reform, which is practically just another path for them to create a new sect among Muslims.

For reform to begin, any religious idea that comes in the path of democratic values in modern era must be rejected. Fortunately, Indian Muslims are in an outstanding moment of history when India has emerged as a major economy and a vibrant democracy. The vast array of economic and educational opportunities as well as religious and political freedom that India offers to Muslims cannot be matched by any Muslim country. To benefit from this outstanding moment, every Indian Muslim must become his or her own role model. Any attempt to surrender personal will before Islamist movements like Tablighi Jamaat, Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and Jamaat-e-Islami will certainly continue to derail the community's progress. Indian Muslims are growing because of their own efforts and not because of these groups. Sometime in 2007,

cricketer Munaf Patel was asked by a reporter as to who was his role model. He replied: "Who could be my role model? I am my own role model."

Notwithstanding the lack of reformist Muslim writers, the agenda of Islamic reformation remains urgent. Some analysts argue that change among Muslims must come from within. This is not a valid argument because throughout history social change has essentially come from outside, as societies have interacted with foreign ideas through globalisation, technologies and wars. Judaism and Christianity have had their own internal strifes and sectarian wars. Islam is going through its own sectarian wars, especially since Muslim minorities such as Shias and Ahmadis are ostracised and attacked in the Islamic mainstream, thereby giving legitimacy for the birth of jihadist organisations such as the Taliban, al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (formerly ISIS). Islam is the youngest of Middle Eastern religions, which should be a cause of hope that its corpus of literature will be questioned, revised or made redundant in coming centuries.

There are templates of reform in history. Jews and Christians have mostly consigned the influence of religious texts such as the Torah and the Bible to their personal domain. In India, most Hindus too have abandoned the Manusmriti, which advocated the caste system. Muslims too will need to consign the Quran to mosques. On July 25, 2015, in the northern Indian city of Lucknow, a Muslim girl refused to appear at a pre-medical examination that could have made her a doctor because she was required to remove her burqa. Progress, or lack of progress, is often the result of such steps. Is it possible that an entire generation of Muslim youths can shed some of their inherited beliefs to move on the path of Islamic reformation? History offers us hope. In Germany and Italy not long ago, a generation of youths abandoned their parents' beliefs in Nazism and Fascism, but they did so only after military defeats. Jihadist forces like the ISIS will need defeating militarily, not only because they are evil but also because their defeat is essential to the survival of democracies.

Those of us who grew up in democracies take our freedoms for granted. Freedom can easily be eclipsed, especially in Europe where we see the birth of Sharia-compliant enclaves. India is already a sharia-compliant state in many respects, especially with laws on Muslim marriage, inheritance and divorce. A form of racism based on Islam exists in vast regions of the Muslim world. For example, Pakistan has a written constitution that bars its own non-Muslim citizens from becoming head of state. This form of racism originates from Islam.

Many Islamic clerics argue that Islam protects minorities, but this effectively is a patronising statement and means that non-Muslims must be ruled by Islam.

The essays and research papers included in this book were published over the past three years. Although they examine the jihadist threats to open societies, they lay out an urgent need for reform among Muslims. One aspect of the global jihad is the rise of terrorists with good educational degrees. Some writers have argued that the lack of education leads to extremism, but the reader of this book will evolve an understanding that “education” also leads to Islamism and jihadism in our social midst.

Over the years, the universe has sent a number of individuals my way to help me. I would like to record my gratitude to Steven Stalinsky, executive director at MEMRI and an internationally recognised expert on cyber jihadism, for invariably facilitating my work. I am grateful to Vikram Sood, the former chief of Research & Analysis Wing, for endorsing this book. I often read his columns because they keep me grounded on national security issues. As India faces enhanced jihadist terror threats, he serves as the 24x7 security consultant to the people of India.

I am thankful to Prabhu Chawla and Yogesh Vajpeyi at *The New Indian Express*, S. Prasannarajan and Ullekh N.P. at *Open* magazine, Smita Prakash at the ANI news agency, Mehr Tarar at the time at the *Daily Times*, Mohammad Shoaib Adil at *Nia Zamana*, Sandeep Balakrishna at Indiafacts.co.in and Rajeev Sachan at *Dainik Jagran* for publishing my columns, but more importantly for allowing me the freedom to write. Friends are the last to recognise us, but Ullekh N. P. was the first. Prabhu Chawla talent-spotted me sometime in 2012 after reading in Indian newspapers an interview I had given to Lalit K. Jha of the Press Trust of India. I also thank Eric B. Brown at the Hudson Institute for letting me include in the book my paper from the *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*. All research papers that I have written at MEMRI, and many of which are included in this volume, were first read and edited by Ruhama Sosnow, Elliot Zweig and Noam Blum. No amount of thanks to them could compensate for their journey with me over a long period.

That writing can be personally meaningful came from one of my readers Bishnu C. Parida, a retired scientist in Cuttack, who wrote to me after reading my column on Pakistan's War Against Indian Civilisation: "I was exhilarated, delighted, educated to have read such a piece of article. I shall keep it as a scripture with me." In my writings, I often use

a specific insight: In 1947 our parents and grandparents mistakenly thought they could buy permanent peace by giving away a piece of territory, thereby creating Pakistan. This insight belongs to Madanmohan Prasad Sinha, who lives in Bihar and foresaw that the USSR would break up, India's population would be an asset not a problem, and China and India would emerge as engines of global economy. I thank friends and authors Asif Jalal, Sultan Shahin, Arif Jamal and Saqlain Imam for their endorsements. I am also thankful to my friend Sam Abraham in Chennai for reading the final draft, and my publisher Naleen Kumar for publishing this book.

My personal life has been in ruins. The way events unfolded in my life meant that both my children – Rumi Shaharyar and Alvira Moledina Ahmad – got separated from me during their childhood. This book is for them, and for them to know that I dearly love them.

**Tufail Ahmad**  
August 15, 2015



# SECTION I

The Rise of the  
Indian Republic





# The Maturing of the Republic

Modern societies evolve out of their primitive forms. On the threshold of its 65th year as a republic, India is not what it used to be for the past several centuries: ruled by kings and nawabs, brutalised by Hindu orthodoxies of caste and sati, or dependent on agriculture. “India has changed more in last six decades than in six previous centuries,” said President Pranab Mukherjee on the eve of the Republic Day last year (2013)], adding: “It will change more in the next ten years than in the previous sixty.”

The motor of change is democracy, or the republic's politics reaffirmed every five years through the conscious act of voting. Democracy refers to *demokratia* – a political system that began in the 5th to 4th centuries BCE when the people (*demos*) of Athens revolted against tyrannical dynasties and established their own *kratos* (rule). Over the past decades, democracy in India has emerged as a revolt against caste and other social inequalities, empowering millions of Dalits, minorities and women. India still subjugates its women, but it is bound to change as more than a million women, elected to the political nurseries of its panchayati raj institutions (local self-governments), alter the balance of gender relations.

The Indian republic is a Greek city state in microcosm, whose citizens interact with philosophical concepts every day, acquiring new understandings of liberty and rationality. As it matures, it inculcates egalitarian ideals in its citizens who, in turn, guard *demokratia*, the republic's dharma, or creed. The egalitarian Indian has defended the order, defeating Indira Gandhi following the Emergency when democracy appeared to be failing, or producing an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) when corruption of an industrial scale began to emerge. The republic is nurtured from below. It recently gave Kashmiri secessionists a recurring opportunity to prove their worth with the option of NOTA, or none of the above, in the ballot.

In primitive societies, consensus emanated from similarities of beliefs and identities; in modern India, consensus is derived from differences and moderated by the media, political parties, voters, and the judiciary. The voter is the sane oracle who, inaugurating an era of coalition politics in 1989, shifted the polity towards federalism, in tune with the diversity of India. From the rise of anti-Congress parties in the post-Emergency period to the rise of the AAP recently, the republic has seen the birth of new parties. It has secured the confidence of the country's minorities. According to a research done by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), India has seen the emergence of "smaller Muslim parties" that determine the political outcomes of states like Assam and Kerala. The Indian polity is ripe for any new party to transform into a countrywide behemoth by practising simple politics: electing its leaders through organisational polls. There is space for all, as no party has got 50 per cent of the votes.

In some way, parties are dying, or getting obscured, eclipsed or forgotten. The Congress has almost faded into oblivion in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi and many other states; the BJP was reduced to irrelevance as a national opposition until Narendra Modi rose from below; the Rashtriya Janata Dal was dumped in Bihar; and *demokratia* caught up with the communists in West Bengal in 2011. It happens because of parties' failure to abide by the republic's dharma: more politics and more democracy. Politics would be deemed honourable if more and more parties had their funds audited and if they held polls to elect party leaders or used the secret ballot to elect chief ministers or the prime minister. If the Congress practised United States-styled primaries to elect party leaders, that itself could herald a revolution.

Among democracies, some are religious states such as Britain whose societies are overwhelmingly secular; some are secular states like the US and India whose societies are predominantly religious. Religious neutrality, established first by Akbar, characterises the Indian state. The founders – Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and B.R. Ambedkar – wrote an array of liberties into the Constitution of India: equality of rights, multi-party elections, free press, individual freedoms, rule of law, independent judiciary, etcetera. Speaking at Oxford in 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh noted that the founding leaders of our republic were "greatly influenced by the ideas associated with the age of Enlightenment in Europe". The political and religious freedoms Indians enjoy would not be possible if the British had not arrived in India.

Democracy is governed by majority rule, but the majority is of the people, not of communities. For those who feed pessimism among minorities, the day is not far when India will see a Muslim prime minister as religion becomes irrelevant. For now, an Indian Muslim politician who can read the republic's political mind, the way Barack Obama read the American mind, is yet to come. Muslims must shed the fear of the BJP; and the politics of secularism and reservation must be defeated by effective policing and by creating jobs for people.

Primitive societies were dependent on agriculture. In a modern nation, even as the agricultural output grows, its share in the gross domestic product must decline and there should be growth in knowledge sectors like biotechnology and financial services. Once seen by the West as the land of snake charmers, India has transformed itself into an information technology destination today. However, it is still an inward-looking mystical civilisation, failing to grasp the notions of power. India contemplated sending troops to Iraq in 2003 but succumbed to a perennial weakness to comprehend its place in the international state system. Its military roles in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives indicate India can exercise hard power abroad.

Amid problems, the republic has been maturing, aided by the Supreme Court which ruled that candidates for elections to legislative bodies had to declare their assets and criminal antecedents, disqualified elected representatives upon conviction in criminal cases, and enshrined in the law negative voting through NOTA. If an Election Commissioner like T.N. Seshan alone could retrieve the autonomy of that constitutional body he headed, it appears that the Central Bureau of Investigation and other government institutions can cease to be the ruling party's mistress. At the heart of the country's politics is the sane oracle, the voter: the elderly who walk to polling booths, tribesmen who defy Naxalites to cast their votes, women who queue up with men, and the youth who secure their aspirations through the ballot. Of 790 million voters, 120 million are in the 18-23 age group, first-time voters who must establish a relationship with the people, not leaders, to secure the republic for generations to come.

# The Radiance of Indian Democracy

Syed Asif Ibrahim's appointment as the first Muslim chief of India's Intelligence Bureau (IB) has attracted national and international attention, especially as the West is focused on Islamic terrorism flourishing in many parts of the world. In India, Muslims have generally welcomed Ibrahim's elevation as the director of IB, but some Muslim and Hindu groups see it as the Congress party's appeasement of Muslims in the run-up to the 2014 elections. These viewpoints reflect a diversity of opinion in Indian democracy, but Ibrahim's appointment is also of much greater significance than is being imagined now.

India is the only country where Muslims have lived in a democracy for more than half a century; the other two countries where Muslims have had some democratic experience are Indonesia and Turkey, but their experiences have been limited to a few decades. Therefore, Ibrahim's promotion as the IB chief, the first for a Muslim in the 125-year history of the domestic intelligence-gathering agency, is important for two key reasons. First, it symbolises the maturing of democracy in India and its positive impact on the collective life of Indian Muslims. Second, it breaks a glass ceiling in an important government agency in which Muslim representation was thought to be insignificant and inconsequential; it also reinforces among Muslims a sense of attachment to India's secular ideals. Ibrahim's new position will be reassuring for Indian Muslims at a time when a number of Muslim youth have been arrested on charges of suspected terrorism.

Let us take the second point first. It is pertinent that a Congress government took this enormously symbolic decision to appoint a Muslim as the IB chief, as it was the Congress which caused the alienation among Muslims from the values that defined the Indian republic. For example, the decision by the Rajiv Gandhi government in 1986 to quash a Supreme Court ruling that favoured alimony to the

destitute Muslim woman Shah Bano not only encouraged fundamentalist forces among Muslims but also opened the floodgates for Hindutva forces in the country – as seen in the demolition of the Babri mosque, the anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat and the bomb blasts targeting Muslims by Hindu extremists. It also engendered a period of alienation among Muslims from the country's democratic mainstream and caused a setback for the secular forces in India. As pointed out by historian Ramachandra Guha, this single decision by the Congress in the Shah Bano case, did much more damage to the health of the modern Indian republic than anything else.

Even as Muslims were appointed to top positions both by the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress – notably A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as president, Hamid Ansari as vice-president, Salman Khurshid as external affairs minister and Altamas Kabir as chief justice of the Supreme Court – there was a deep-rooted feeling among Indian Muslims that they were unable to reach top positions in the military and intelligence agencies, a fact noted by the late scholar Omar Khalidi in his writings. Therefore, Ibrahim's appointment breaks a glass ceiling in the intelligence services, undermines Islamist fundamentalist forces which argue against the democratic credentials of India, removes a sense of alienation among Muslims, and upholds the secular values of the Indian republic as conceived by Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and B.R. Ambedkar. Ibrahim's elevation marks a turning point in the flowering of democracy in India. For Indian Muslims, some of the incidents, notably in Gujarat, are a reminder that for each Muslim experiencing discrimination, there are thousands of Hindus who stand by them in everyday life; and for each Muslim facing unfairness, hundreds of Dalits too suffer bias. This is the hallmark of Indian democracy and its diversity.

This brings us to the first point of this article: democracy's impact on Indian Muslims. Ever since America became the first democracy in 1776, the number of democracies has risen among the 193 member-nations of the United Nations. Over the years, democracy has also emerged as the destroyer of primordial barriers such as caste, tribe and religion. India, being the largest democracy in the world, has seen a wide-scale destruction of caste and religious barriers over the past six decades during which the lower orders of Indian society have gained unprecedented political empowerment and access to economic and educational opportunities. India's Muslim population is the third largest in the world, after Indonesia and Pakistan; and the democratic experience of Indian Muslims,

though least studied by universities and think tanks, is of larger political and philosophical significance.

In the West, several influential writers and leaders have recognised the unique democratic experience of Indian Muslims in recent years. On December 16, 2003, David Frum, a former United States presidential speech writer, wrote that Muslims of “an increasingly free-market and open-minded India... (will) lead Muslims worldwide toward the modern and moderate Islam”. A similar line of thinking has been advanced by noted columnist Thomas L. Friedman in his books (such as *The World is Flat*) and by George W. Bush in his address from Delhi in 2006. Democracy’s moderating influence has also been visible in another sphere: Indian Muslims have generally shunned the jihadi call of al-Qaeda and the Taliban in the country’s neighbourhood.

Democracies also create positive turning points in the life of their people and promote people with skills to higher positions irrespective of their religious or caste affiliations. Ibrahim succeeded not because he is a Muslim, but because he is an Indian professional who has served the IB for three decades. Let us understand it this way: Barack Obama became the first black US president not because he is a leader of the blacks, but because he is a leader of the Americans. India is passing through an outstanding moment, creating vast economic and educational opportunities for its people. Indian Muslims can succeed only if they are, like Ibrahim, prepared to benefit from these emerging opportunities. In this sense, Ibrahim’s appointment as the IB chief cannot be seen by Muslims as a favour by the Congress. The fact that he entered the Indian Police Service, selection to which is through merit alone, reveals a key point: merit alone paves the road for success, and opportunities for success can be realised only by strengthening the democratic foundations of India.

# India is a Western Country

**A**s India enters its 64th year as a republic, it is also being transformed as a Western country, with the organising principles of its politics and society rooted in the European Enlightenment. In the Indian imagination, the West is a geographic concept, covering mainly the United States, Britain and parts of Europe. However, the reality is otherwise. Several countries, notably Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, are situated in the east, but in terms of their values and politics they are firmly part of the West. Conversely, countries such as Russia and some in Latin America are geographically in the west but cannot be called a Western country as their citizens do not enjoy the social and political freedoms available to free people in the West.

French author Guy Sorman traces the concept of the West to 25 centuries ago when the Greeks perceived themselves as Western, as opposed to the Persians, who were seen as Orientals. It was also in ancient Greece that man began imagining himself as a rational being, realising that individual endeavour, rather than inherited beliefs, shape human life. The ideas of rationality and Enlightenment travelled through the Roman world to Britain and later to America and India. The very word “India” came from Indus, a term used by the Greeks to denote the territory beyond the river Sindh. The milestones on Indian roads that mark the distance to a particular destination or the cutlery – spoons, forks and knives that we use to eat or serve food – are of Roman origin.

Some key principles that define the West – for example, individualism, liberty and democracy – also inform the foundations of the Indian republic. The system of governance in the West, also practised in contemporary India, is not based on religion or ideology as it is, for example, in Saudi Arabia and North Korea. In a Western country, every citizen has the right to hold top positions, unlike in

non-Western countries such as Pakistan, where a Pakistani Hindu or Christian cannot even hope to become head of state. In contemporary times, India and South Africa are emerging as Western nations in terms of their values and political ideals.

Pondering over how societies progress, French sociologist Emile Durkheim argues that modern societies derive consensus from differences while traditional societies were based on consensus originating from similarities of beliefs and identities. Consensus in India today is derived from differences and is moderated by political parties, the media and a secular commentariat – not by religions or castes. Some countries in the West are religious states, notably the United Kingdom, but their societies are secular, with no role for religion in policymaking. India and the United States are predominantly religious societies, but the state is secular. A secular Indian republic nurtured by Jawaharlal Nehru has, in political scientist Sunil Khilnani's words, “etched itself into the imagination of Indians in a way that no previous political agency had ever done.”

From the mid-1700s onwards, as the US became independent, its British rulers began searching for new colonies, arriving in India. Both America and India have emerged as products of the European Enlightenment. Both defeated Britain to win independence but did not reject the principles of individual liberty, equality and democracy left by the colonists. India shares some defining principles with the West, for example, the rule of law and a justice system blind to caste and religious divisions; a civil service that treats people as Indians, not as Brahmins or Muslims; the English language that connects Indians globally; the freedom of the press; a multiparty system; and democratic governance. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, speaking at Oxford in 2005, noted how the founders of the Indian republic – Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar – were “greatly influenced by the ideas associated with the age of Enlightenment in Europe.”

It was good for India to lose the 1857 war. If the British had lost the war of 1857, Indians would have been ruled by kings, queens and nawabs for a few centuries more. Caste, sati and other Hindu religious orthodoxies and Islamic rule would have dominated our lives. A British victory meant that an entirely new set of factors were introduced into our society – for example, the railways which, in a way, broke down divisions like caste in society, and parliamentary democracy guaranteeing a host of political and social liberties. During the past six decades, democracy in India has led to an unprecedented social and political empowerment of Dalits and women.



Few Indian writers grasp the positive consequences of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 for India. Prior to that, the Indian imagination was fettered by the Soviet model, a version of which known as Nehruvian socialism crippled policymaking. The Fall of the Berlin Wall vastly unshackled the Indian mind, ushering in an era of reforms that have unleashed unprecedented economic growth in India over the past two decades. As a result, India is seen globally as a great power, capable of anchoring the international state system and strengthening the global economy in the coming years.

However, a major obstacle has been a congenital Indian trait not to use power even when terrorists threaten the country from abroad. "In 3,000 years of our history, people from all over the world have come and invaded us, captured our lands, conquered our minds.... Yet we have not done this to any other nation. We have not conquered anyone," remarked A.P.J. Abdul Kalam at a seminar in Hyderabad in 2005. Kalam felt that this unwillingness to use power abroad was "because we respect the freedom of others". He is right, as India did not stay in Bangladesh despite winning the 1971 war. However, an inherent unwillingness to use power abroad when India is not a party to a conflict is changing. Now, Indian women, rifles strapped to their backs, can be seen patrolling in faraway lands such as Liberia on peace missions authorised by the international community. In the past, leftist writers have viewed the West as colonial in intent, but Western nations are no longer colonisers. As India finds its respectful place internationally, as a "Western" country it is acquiring a new sense of purpose and a willingness to use power as a force for the good.

## A New Breed of Indians

For thousands of years, people have prostrated at temples or other religious places across India, but perhaps for the first time in India's history, on May 20, a new member of the human species walked up in New Delhi, knelt down in prayer with folded hands and touched his forehead at the footsteps of Parliament, a political institution created by reason and essentially not a place of worship. Few can grasp the symbolism of Narendra Modi's prostration, but his act signifies a democratic revolution of mind that Indian people are going through.

While there are concerns about the sectarianism of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which occupied Modi's adult life, what is not in doubt is its role in defending democratic values during the Emergency, a period during which Modi struggled alongside Gandhians, communists, liberals and Muslims to reclaim liberty for all. Modi told his biographer Andy Marino that "the democratic values that I found" during the anti-Emergency struggle became "a part of my DNA". He explained: "I became aware; I understood the Constitution, I understood the rights, because before that I was living in a different world. The Emergency became a university for me."

Democracy creates new worlds. As a model of politics, it equips tea boys like Modi with ambition to achieve the impossible. Democracy emerged during the 5th-4th centuries BCE when the *demos* (people) of Athens revolted against their tyrants and established their own *kratos* (rule). For the next 2,000 years, democracy was not part of the political agenda until an underground intellectual movement of ideas, known as the Enlightenment, germinated through the 16th-19th centuries, giving birth to the American and French revolutions and reinventing democracy. The Enlightenment, writes Jonathan Israel in *Revolution of the Mind*, was "quintessentially defined by its insistence on full freedom of thought, expression, and the press, and by identifying democracy as the best form of government."

It is historically extraordinary that Modi was born in the year (1950) in which the people of India gave themselves the Constitution, a politically enforceable document of Enlightenment ideas: liberty of thought and expression, free press, religious freedom, individual liberty, equality, right to form parties and vote. Born after Independence, Modi is a product of Indian democracy, both by experience and education, being a graduate and educated in political science. He represents a new species of democratic Indians: 50 per cent of India's 1.2 billion people are below 25 years of age; 65 per cent are below 35. This is essentially a new political population, raised in freedom, birthed by Enlightenment.

If the Emergency became a university of democracy for Modi, new Indians are debating democratic values and ideas of the Enlightenment thanks to television in slums and villages, newspapers in towns and trains, and Twitter and Facebook on mobile phones. Leaders who can read a nation's political mind win elections. Modi understood the youth who put up their vote-linked fingers for selfies and television cameras to assert power and became his trolls. India needs 10 million jobs a year for its youth to realise their aspirations, which Modi translated into a national development agenda: to build 100 smart cities, extend broadband to villages, introduce bullet trains, and construct toilets rather than temples. "I want to see you, laptop in one hand, Quran in the other," Modi told Muslims.

"Enlightenment philosophers," writes James MacGregor Burns in his book *Light and Fire*, "moved attention to human beings as the measure of all things." Modi comprehended that people alone mattered, a characteristic of the Enlightenment. Over the past decades, democracy has empowered millions of the lower castes, and caste becoming less relevant has resulted in the downsizing of sectarian leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mayawati and Lalu Prasad Yadav. Having grown up in a democracy, Modi knew that democracy destructs archaisms like caste and secularism and reorders societies for all. While the Congress has been luring Muslims through the divisive politics of quota, Modi has put Indians on an inclusive agenda through his substantive politics of India First.

Democracies destruct despotisms and hereditary rule, which the Congress did not understand but Modi did from Day One. He launched his campaign by targeting "shehzada" (prince) Rahul Gandhi, which was a direct attack at the gravity of hereditary power. In the post-Enlightenment era, heredity is an uncivilised principle of government formation. The Congress may return to power, but Indian democracy

will not accept a hereditary ruler. A Congress leader blamed Mossad for the party's rout in the election, but Congressmen must remember that politics that cannot grasp the sweep of democracy will not succeed.

Modi is also a good reader of India, the core of which is shaped by the overriding factor of consensus, a point A.B. Vajpayee understood and L.K. Advani did not throughout the divisive Ayodhya politics. Unlike Advani, Modi comprehended the entirety of India, remembering to visit Vajpayee before and after the election campaign. In computer programming, a destructor is something that is automatically triggered to cleanse objects whose lifetime has expired or are unnecessary, thereby freeing up resources. If India were a computer program, Modi was automatically triggered as a destructor, having decoded that divisive politics is unwanted now. Modi's victory buries an era of bitter politics of secularism, casteism and regionalism, also proving that the period of coalition governments was a bend in the road of Indian democracy.

Indians will retain identities as Hindus, Muslims, Tamilians, Bengalis or others, but democracy is the outstanding factor that defines Indian society's general will generated from differences, unlike in the past when consensus emanated from similarities of beliefs and identities. Burns writes: "Enlightenment empowered the human mind for new worlds of liberty and self-government."

Indian democracy has reached a turning point where no leader or party can turn the wheel back, and Modi, too, shall become irrelevant should he fail Indians. Democracies face threats from: one, organised groups that threaten the unorganised, like those living in slums; two, corporate houses that influence the media and politics excessively; three, big governments that intrude into citizens' lives; four, the masses' unnecessary adoration of leaders, which necessitates that Indian youth must identify with people, not with leaders or parties.

## Narendra Modi – Herald of a New India

As he arrives at the Red Fort in the morning of August 15 for his first Independence Day speech, Narendra Modi is acutely aware that he will be addressing a new country, a nation of free people whose aspirations have grown from the Constitution of India. As testified in his recent speeches, Modi believes in the force of democracy to propel the common man to power and views the constitution as a project of liberty. For Modi, not only this country is new, but the current Parliament too is new; two-thirds of its members are, like him, first time in India's highest legislature. In February, Modi said: "We are one of the youngest nations. Nearly 65 per cent of our population is below the age of 35." To elaborate: of 1.25 billion Indians, 50 per cent are under 25; of 814 million voters, 150 million were first-time voters this year.

India's first-time voters, aged 18-23 years, are more than the combined populations of Australia, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. Young Indians constitute a new political population, have no emotional entanglements with Partition and can hardly connect with the torments of the Emergency era. They grew up in a free society in which their ideas of what a good society should look like were shaped by quarrelsome parliamentary discussions, powerful television debates and bitter election campaigns that redefined India's political cohesion. Consequently, Indians are subjecting their own ideas to rational criticism on Twitter and Facebook. They are individuals who view themselves as Indians as if India were a new nation and not as members of castes or religions.

In history, humans trod the earth as members of clans; now they walk as individuals. Modi foresaw them as the source of power for modern times. "The invention of the individual was turning the source of authority upside down. Increasingly it was to be found 'below', in human agency and conscience rather than 'above'," writes Larry

Siedentop in *Inventing the Individual*, which traces modern civilisation from its Indo-European antiquity. In elections, Modi addressed Indians as individuals, not as communities. Modi, who has travelled to 400 districts, said: "The nation is tired of politics in the name of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian... Now the country should run in the name of youth, farmer, the poor, the disabled."

Modi understands that democracy is birthing Indians whose identity is political in nature; they are political animals who rise in movie theatres voluntarily to hear the national anthem, notably in the state of Maharashtra. Modi – who in David Cameron's words "got more votes than any other politician anywhere in the universe" – comprehends democracy's workings in ways no politician does. At the Bharatiya Janata Party's National Council meet, he described democracy as "a cherished heritage", observing "we can look in the eye of the world because we are a democracy.... We are proud that we follow the tradition of a republic." Over the past decades, democracy has emerged as a revolt against caste and other inequalities; the 2014 elections struck at the hereditary sources of power.

Democracy means *demokratia*, which rose through the 5th-4th centuries BCE when the *demos* (people) of Athens revolted against tyrants and established their *kratos* (rule), but it disappeared for the next 2,000 years. However, a movement of ideas – known as the Enlightenment – in favour of individual liberty, equality, right to form parties, a free press, and freedom of thought and expression regrew through the 16th-19th centuries, sprouting the American and French revolutions. America became free in 1776; the British moved to India. In the 1857 war of Indian kings and nawabs, the British won, bringing ideas of liberty and rule of law to India. In 1950, Indians gave themselves the Constitution, a legally enforceable document of Enlightenment ideas.

Freedom is meaningful to Indians in personal ways, notably when boys and girls hold hands on Valentine's Day in a public demonstration of equality. At Oxford in 2005, Manmohan Singh noted that the architects of the Constitution of India were "greatly influenced by the ideas associated with the age of Enlightenment". Modi, a graduate in political science, is alive to a constitution's role in bettering human lives. Addressing Nepal's parliament which is writing a constitution, he lauded the power of the ballot over the bullet, adding: "The constitution is not a book, it connects yesterday, today and tomorrow." Earlier sages authored the Vedas and Upanishads, he said, observing: "In the same series, in modern life, a nation's constitution is born as a new scripture."

Nehru was prophetic at the midnight hour: "India will awake to life and freedom." Rejecting the Indian practice of secularism which cultivated sectarianisms, Modi is pursuing the Nehruvian ideal of the separation of the state and religion. In Hyderabad, Modi said: "The government has only one holy book: the Indian Constitution." In Nepal, he did not preach Hinduism. Democracy-bred Indians are a new species; Modi is their type. On May 20, Modi touched his forehead at the footsteps of Parliament. Once inside, this new species introduced himself thus: "It is the power of our constitution that a poor person belonging to a... deprived family is standing here today." Democracy removes power from kings and hands it to the people. Modi is the Enlightenment's best representative in India.

"Enlightenment philosophers," writes James MacGregor Burns in *Light and Fire*, "moved attention to human beings as the measure of all things." Modi redefined India's discourse for the common man. He said: "A single family has ruled the nation for decades, but they have not been successful in doing anything for... [the] common man." In January, he articulated his idea of India through maxims in Sanskrit focusing on the common man: happiness does not lie in the desire for heaven or reincarnation, it lies in dousing the suffering of all beings; may we all be protected and nourished; the mother and motherland are superior to heaven; Vishnu's devotees are those who feel the pain of others. Indian democracy is ultimately about engineering the rise of the common man; its next half century will produce more Indians like Modi.

## Pakistani Slugfest over Shahrukh Khan

**H**afiz Muhammad Saeed, the self-confessed leader of the banned outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, may think that Pakistan is the best Islamic nation for Bollywood star Shahrukh Khan to move to, but it is India that is arguably the best Muslim country today. Muslims in India enjoy complete political and religious liberty, a free legislative environment to undertake economic and educational initiatives, a vibrant media and cinema that teach liberal coexistence, and access to a vast number of universities and institutes of modern education. There is absolutely no Muslim country that offers such a vast array of freedoms to its people.

India is able to offer these freedoms to its citizens because it has been a successful democracy. It can be argued that it was good for India to lose the 1857 war; if the British had lost, Indians would have continued to be governed by kings and nawabs, and under sharia courts that existed during the Mughal era. At the time of Independence, the British left behind a justice system that was blind to religious and caste inequities in Indian society; an inclusive democracy that guaranteed equal rights and religious and political freedoms for all; the English language that opened the doorway to Enlightenment values and scientific education; and a civil service that treated everyone as Indians rather than Muslims, Hindus or Christians. Muslims in India enjoy these freedoms because India is a thriving democracy, unlike Pakistan that chose a discriminatory constitution, barring its own citizens, if they are Hindus or Christians, from holding top positions such as the President of Pakistan. Over the past half century, hundreds of millions of Dalits and women have found political empowerment and social freedom in Indian democracy.

Islam cannot be a good model of governance for modern times because it fails to imagine situations in which non-Muslim citizens can be trusted to govern a Muslim country. Conversely, democracies trust



their citizens irrespective of their religion. In a democracy like India, any citizen can compete to be the elected ruler. As democracy matures, India has appointed Muslims to top positions, currently Hamid Ansari as vice-president, Salman Khurshid as external affairs minister, Justice Altamas Kabir as the chief justice of India, and Syed Asif Ibrahim as the chief of the Intelligence Bureau. It is also true that Muslims lag behind in India's collective life, but this is because they are under the influence of the orthodox ulema or because Muslim politicians fail to imagine themselves as leaders of all Indians. A Muslim politician will be the country's prime minister the day Indian Muslims begin to view themselves as leaders of all Indians and not only of Muslims, much like Barack Obama who imagined himself as a leader not only of blacks but of all Americans.

Effectively, India is a "Western" country. In the popular imagination, the West is viewed as a geographic concept, covering mainly the United States, Britain and parts of Europe. However, the ground realities are otherwise. Several countries, notably Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, are situated in the east, but in terms of their values and politics they are firmly part of the West. Conversely, countries such as Russia and some in Latin America are geographically in the west but cannot be called a Western country as their citizens do not enjoy the social and political freedoms available to free people in the West. The organising principles of Indian polity and society are the same that define a Western country: a multiparty system, individualism, liberty, a free press and rule of law. As in a Western country, consensus about governance, politics and society is moderated by the media and political parties and is derived from differences rather than similarities of religion and ideology as in Saudi Arabia or North Korea.

Early this year, Shahrukh Khan wrote a long article in which he discussed how "stereotyping and contextualising" determine the way societies treat us as individuals as we interact with others. Khan narrated that he is loved as a Bollywood star in every country, but is also detained for questioning by officials at airports in the United States as his surname is shared by an unknown terrorist. He observed: "There have been occasions when I have been accused of bearing allegiance to our neighbouring nation (Pakistan)."

Hafiz Saeed reacted to this statement, suggesting that Khan, and presumably all Indian Muslims, should move to Pakistan. If Khan were to move to Pakistan, think of the images he would witness every day: the genocide of Shia Muslims; the Taliban bombers shooting girls and

namazis; Karachi up in flames and Pakistani businessmen leaving the country; the plight of Hindus and Christians; and lawlessness everywhere.

Hafiz Saeed and his cohorts must bear in mind that terrorism which affects Muslims in India originates from Pakistan: the jihad in Kashmir through the 1990s or the attacks by the Indian Mujahideen in collaboration with its controllers in Pakistan. Like any country, India has its own share of extremist Hindus as well as Islamist and naxalite militants, but the courts are handling those cases.

Indian democracy is a model for all Islamic countries. It is the only country where Muslims have experienced democracy solidly for more than half a century; the other countries where Muslims have had some democratic experience are Indonesia and Turkey, but their experiences have been limited to just a few decades. Democracies trust their citizens and are accountable to them. Democracies also bring freedom and economic prosperity to their people. In his book *Development as Freedom*, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen demonstrates that famines have occurred only in countries governed under authoritarianism while freedom available to people in democracies has ensured the economic welfare of their entire populations. Indian democracy has a large Muslim population, about the same as in Pakistan. Muslims in India are beginning to benefit from a sea of economic and educational opportunities opening before them as its democracy matures and economy prospers.

Islamic and authoritarian countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and North Korea do not trust their own people. Islamic terrorists, jihadists like Hafiz Saeed and other Taliban-like Islamists think of defending their religions and ideologies rather than thinking of the interests and welfare of their people. It is because of such thinking that 180 million people of Pakistan are today literally buried under the weight of a failed education system, a rapidly collapsing economy that is forcing business leaders to move their money to countries such as Sri Lanka, a lawlessness that makes common Pakistanis insecure in their own homes, and a future that fails to offer hope. The Inter-Services Intelligence, a friend of Hafiz Saeed and which imagines itself as the ideological guardian of the Islamic state of Pakistan, could do a favour by trusting the Pakistani people and letting them decide their own course of life and governance.

# Magna Carta and the Masses of India

A defining principle of modern civilisation is that no one is above the law. This idea is the basic organising principle of politics and law in the countries of the free world, which include European nations, the United Kingdom, the United States, India, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and others. Unlike the free world, rulers in the countries such as Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Russia, North Korea and China are above the law, or at least the law is subservient to them or to the ruling political parties headed by them. The idea that presidents, prime ministers, queens and kings are subject to the rule of law is a distinct legacy of Magna Carta, or the Great Charter.

Eight hundred years ago, on June 15 in 1215 CE, King John of England was forced by rebellious barons to grant Magna Carta, which engendered a number of rights that would later become the legacy of democratic nations. The rebellion was the culmination of different factors: mobilisation of resources for war on France and military defeats; mismanagement of personal affairs of the king, including the auctioning of his wife, Isabella; and widespread misrule that affected merchants. Magna Carta, inked at Runnymede 20 miles (32 kilometres) west of London, was part a grant from King John and part a contract and peace treaty between him and the barons. In the words of British Prime Minister David Cameron, Magna Carta altered “forever the balance of power between the governed and the government”.

Before Magna Carta, kings and queens exercised arbitrary powers, in accordance with the doctrine of divine right. Magna Carta ensured for the first time that sovereign rulers were brought under man-made law or under a constitution. In his book *Magna Carta*, Nicholas Vincent observes that the “fundamental principles underlying the negotiation of Magna Carta” were the appeal to “necessity” and “reason”, both terms “divorced from the scriptural or theological imperatives”. Today, the phrase “Rule of Law” has become an essential creed of modern democracies. Magna Carta initiated not only a tradition of rule of law, it also engendered a host of rights and liberties for ordinary people in the free world.

In jurisprudence, its legacies include the protection of individuals from arbitrary arrest, a due process of law and fair trial, of no one being above the law, the ideal that justice delayed is justice denied, and that justice cannot be

sold. Magna Carta granted the right to religious freedom and ensured that governments could not levy taxes without the people's approval; for example, budgets of all democratic countries today must be passed by their elected parliaments. It also included many other rights such as of women and widows, and of traders to travel, protection against illegal seizure of property by officials, and introduction of standard measures and weights.

Sir Robert Worcester, chairman of the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Commemoration Committee, wrote: "The principles contained in Magna Carta now affect the lives of nearly two billion people in more than 100 countries. It is an exceptional document on which all democratic societies have been constructed." Individual liberties granted by Magna Carta were later incorporated in the American Bill of Rights, 1791, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, and the European Convention on Human Rights, 1950.

These liberties were also protected by the Constitution of India under Articles 14 (equality before the law), 19 (freedom of speech and assembly), 21 (right to life and liberty), 32 (right to constitutional remedy) and 300-A (right to property), among others.

However, a vast number of the 1.26 billion Indians fail to benefit from the freedoms enshrined in Magna Carta. In Kanpur, Umakant Mishra, who was suspended from his job as a postman after being accused of stealing Rs. 57.60, was finally absolved of the charges after 30 years and 350 court hearings. In Delhi, 19-year-old vegetable seller Shamsuddin, who was arrested on charges of stealing Rs. 200, spent a year in jail as he did not have Rs. 10,000 to obtain a bail bond. Khalid Qureshi spent 13 years in jail after being accused for stealing Rs. 90; the Delhi High Court acquitted him stating that he was arrested in a case of mistaken identity. There are numerous such cases reported from across the country. Ideally, our justice system should work like it worked swiftly to give bail to Bollywood actor Salman Khan within hours of conviction this year. Khan was sentenced to five years in prison for culpable homicide in a hit-and-run case.

In November 2011, it was estimated that, in a decade from 2001, more than 14,000 Indians had died in custody, mostly from torture. In November 2013, the Supreme Court was informed that 12,000 Indians had died in jail and police stations over a course of five years. In several cases, courts in Indian towns have convicted policemen of custodial killings. In March, a Delhi court convicted four policemen for torturing a man to death in custody. Cases of custodial killings continue to be reported from across the country. Similarly, there are numerous cases of riots in the country in which many people have been killed. Yet the Indian justice system does work, but it works very slowly and to the disadvantage of the poor.

As the world celebrates the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, one should bear in mind that individual liberties incorporated in the Constitution of India do not reach the masses. This is complicated by corruption in the policing system and a sluggish judiciary. The biggest obstacle to ensuring a fair system of justice and liberty for Indians seems to be the backlog of cases. According to available statistics, the number of pending cases with the Supreme Court was

nearly 65,000 as on December 1, 2014. The figure up to the year ending 2013 was nearly 45 lakh cases for the two dozen high courts and 2.6 crore cases for the lower courts. Unless the Indian government works on an emergency basis to redress this backlog of cases, the rule of law will remain a mirage for the masses and their capability to live a life of liberty will be a crushing nightmare.



# **SECTION II**

Al-Qaeda  
Threat to India





# Al-Qaeda's Indian Frustrations

On June 10, al-Qaeda released a video that reveals its growing frustration over its inability to recruit Indian Muslims. In that, Maulana Asim Umar, a scholarly militant who liaises closely with al-Qaeda's core leadership, appears worried: "Why are the jihadi battlefields devoid of Indian Muslims?" However, the purpose of the video – titled "Why is there no storm in your river?" – is to coax Indian Muslims to join the global jihad of al-Qaeda. Speaking in Urdu, Asim Umar, who devises al-Qaeda's jihadi strategy for South Asia, mentions Delhi's Jama Masjid, Red Fort and Qutub Minar in order to appeal to Indian Muslims' sense of past glory, and states thus: "America is licking its wound in Afghanistan; many battalions from Afghanistan have reached Syria; the battlefields of jihad are waiting for Indian Muslims, the heirs of Aurangzeb and Tipu Sultan."

In the years after 9/11, three Indians got entangled in international jihadi networks: Kafeel Ahmed, a Bangalore-born Muslim who was raised in Saudi Arabia, died carrying out a car bombing at Glasgow Airport in June 2007; Dhiren Barot aka Abu Musa al-Hindi, a Vadodara-born Hindu who got radicalised in Britain, converted to Islam and is imprisoned for his role in jihad; Mohammad Niaz, who was arrested in Paris, is believed to have ties with the proscribed Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). These cases of jihadi radicalisation occurred abroad. At home, Indian Muslims have generally shunned the message of jihad – this is because they feel integrated well into Indian society thanks to its plural ethos and they hope for a better future in a thriving democracy and economy which offers a scale of opportunities not matched by any Muslim country.

However, the Indian security establishment cannot afford to slip into complacency, as al-Qaeda's core leadership in Pakistan has been consistently trying to capitalise on the 2002 Gujarat riots and the recent killings of Muslims in Myanmar and Assam and on the

disaffection of certain Muslim youth with the mishandling of terror cases by police personnel in parts of India. There are also no indications that al-Qaeda is a diminishing force – globally or in India's neighbourhood – with its central leadership safely ensconced in Pakistan.

In January 2013, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or the CSIS, organised a foresight conference of counterterrorism experts in order to explore what al-Qaeda would look like in 2018. The experts, who are anonymous, viewed al-Qaeda as a phenomenon comprising the following: a central core led by Ayman al-Zawahiri; a network of regional affiliates working in close relationship with the core; like-minded outfits functioning as fellow travellers; home-grown extremists in the West; sympathisers across the globe; and the jihadi ideology. One more can be added to this: the Internet, which has emerged as the key enabler of al-Qaeda's training and ideology.

The experts examined which path al-Qaeda would follow in the next five years: its gradual decline because of internal divisions; lack of leadership and pressures from intelligence agencies; an incremental growth of the jihadist group boosted by terror sanctuaries and a resilient leadership under al-Zawahiri; or its rapid growth aided by the jihadists' capture of power in places like Afghanistan and Yemen. On the basis of their conclusions, the CSIS produced a report, "The Future of Al-Qaeda", warning that the jihadi force will most likely experience an incremental growth, bolstered by unstable and weakly governed regions.

Terror sanctuaries in Mali, Syria, Lebanon and Afghanistan are likely to aid the functioning of al-Qaeda as "a flat, loose but efficient network" – a scenario in which threats become less predictable and more numerous as new affiliates proliferate in unstable regions, or as preset dates of withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan and recessionary cutbacks in counterterrorism funding from Western governments create "blind spots" for security agencies. In such a situation, "The West grows increasingly vulnerable at the very time" al-Qaeda, the report argues, "grows incrementally more capable". It also notes that al-Qaeda's future lies in Syria, a major training ground from 2003 to 2009 for its Iraq operations, because of its proximity to Jordan and Israel. There are 1,200-1,500 jihadi fighters in Syria.

The report does not speak much about the Taliban's rise after 2014. Of India's interest is its analysis of how al-Qaeda's core has survived in the past decade, re-emerging with vigour after each warning of its demise. "The more it changes, the more it is the same", is how the

report sums up the survivability of al-Qaeda's core, adding that it enjoys an "unmolested existence" in India's neighbourhood. It rejects Western media reports that the core leadership of al-Qaeda under Osama bin Laden had not been in sync with its affiliates, noting that he had indeed been involved in "every recent major Al-Qaeda threat" and his successor, al-Zawahiri, has demonstrated a capability to oversee the expansion of jihadi battlefields. The report warns that al-Qaeda's core enjoys "a well-established sanctuary in Pakistan ... poised to expand across the border into Afghanistan" after the exit of US troops from that country in 2014. In a recent issue of jihadi magazine *Azan*, the Taliban warned: "Once the mujahideen secure Afghanistan in 2014, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are sure to follow."

A key factor behind al-Qaeda's growth is its opportunistic strategy: moving into failing states like Afghanistan and Libya; striking alliances in Iraq, Syria, Kenya, Tanzania and Yemen; embedding itself in regional jihadi outfits in the Caucasus, Central and South-east Asia; capitalising on disorders in countries engulfed by the Arab Spring; and striving to recruit disaffected Muslim youth everywhere. Its call for jihad finds acceptance among fellow travellers like Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed, who said recently: "Militant activities in Pakistan do not fall in the category of jihad.... However, Muslims will have to continue jihad (in other countries) to maintain their freedom."

As jihadi forces have gathered strength after 2014, India will need to be on the alert for them through the next decade. Some analysts argue rightly that the Taliban and al-Qaeda cannot capture Pakistan's nuclear weapons, but this theory about a storm and grab fails if one considers al-Qaeda core's ability to penetrate the Pakistani military and recruit officers for this job. Al-Qaeda's opportunistic strategy has not succeeded in recruiting Indian Muslims, but there is always a risk that some disaffected youth might get drawn to its jihadi lure.

# Al-Qaeda's Indian Strategy

In recent years, India has been frequently mentioned in al-Qaeda's literature, but a statement by a senior militant in Pakistan on September 30 indicates that the terror group is evolving its strategy for the Myanmar-Assam (India) region. In the statement, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, who was appointed as al-Qaeda's head of preaching and media department for Pakistan in 2009, warned that the recent killings of Muslims in Myanmar and Assam "provide impetus for us to hasten our advance towards Delhi". He noted: "I warn the Indian government that after Kashmir, Gujarat... you may add Assam to the long list of your evil deeds."

Al-Qaeda's emerging thinking on the Myanmar-Assam region is consistent with its new jihadi framework on South Asia. From 2008 onwards, after al-Qaeda militants were tortured in Pakistani prisons, the jihadist terror group has produced academic research arguing that the Pakistan Army is an apostate force and eligible to be annihilated for supporting the United States' war on terror. The Pakistan Army has been involved in killing Muslims – al-Qaeda has argued in its videos and statements – through the past three centuries: notably as part of Indian units of the British colonial force in the 1757 war, against Mughal rulers in 1857 and during British military expeditions to Baghdad and Jerusalem before the Second World War; and after 1947, in the 1971 Bangladesh war, in toppling the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001 and in the Pakistani tribal region and Balochistan recently. To advance its jihadi framework, al-Qaeda relies on an Islamist interpretation that a Muslim "assisting infidels even partly" has left Islam and is therefore liable to be killed.

Another factor that marks an element of India perspective in al-Qaeda's strategic thinking is its recruitment of Pakistani militants to top operational and organisational positions, for example Ilyas Kashmir and Mansoor Badr, both of whom were killed in US drone

strikes. Ustad Farooq, the first Pakistani national to be promoted to a leadership position in al-Qaeda, has emerged as its sole spokesman on South Asia. Early this year, Farman Ali Shinwari, a key militant commander, was appointed as the head of al-Qaeda's Pakistani branch in place of Mansoor Badr. According to Pakistani author Amir Mir, Shinwari's three brothers were involved in jihad in Kashmir in the 1990s. Although al-Qaeda has been led by Arab fighters, its recruitment of local militants means that the group has a ready historical-jihadi framework on India, where it sees a large presence of disaffected Muslims.

Following the killing of Osama bin Laden, the US has given an impression that al-Qaeda has been largely defeated. However, ground realities are different: hordes of al-Qaeda terrorists can be seen roaming publicly in Somalia, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Iraq and Egypt. The Taliban and al-Qaeda videos emerging from Afghanistan and Pakistan on jihadi Internet forums reveal a similar pattern: in these videos, militants are not seen hiding in caves and mountains, but, led by their commanders, they pass through villages in droves.

In recent months, Afghan soldiers defecting to the Taliban were garlanded at public ceremonies in remote villages in the presence of children. Some US analysts have sought to present that the focus of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the leader of the Taliban, focus is limited to Afghanistan. In reality, all jihadist groups in the Middle East and the Caucasus have offered, like Osama bin Laden did, their *bai'ya* (oath of allegiance) to Mullah Omar, who is deemed as Emir-ul-Momineen, or leader of the faithful, leading the global jihad.

In Pakistan, there is a worrying pattern in counter-insurgency: while several Taliban and al-Qaeda militants have been killed in US drone strikes, the Pakistani military operations have invariably avoided killing or capturing any top Taliban commander; the only exception was about two Taliban spokesmen, Maulvi Omar and Muslim Khan, who were detained.

Pakistan does not need to kill thousands of militants to win this war and curb Islamist extremism: it merely needs to kill or arrest the top 25 commanders, including Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, Fazlur Rehman Khalil and Maulana Masood Azhar. However, this is unlikely to occur as the Pakistan Army, once a strong force, is too weak now to confront them. Currently, the Taliban militants are recuperating and strengthening their fighters in the hope of beginning a new era of jihad following the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan by 2014.

In his statement, Ustad Farooq mentioned the issue of Muslim minorities in Thailand, Myanmar, India and Sri Lanka, and in a bid to recruit Pakistani soldiers to al-Qaeda's cause, argued that Muslims who had been supporting Pakistan had migrated to Assam and Myanmar because of the Pakistani Army's failure to win the 1971 Bangladesh war. The lower ranks of the Pakistan Army are influenced by the jihadi message. Over the past three decades, soldiers recruited into the Pakistan Army have been influenced by a jihadi culture and in the next three decades they will be moving into decision-making positions in the military.

Notwithstanding India's unilateral drive to better relations with Pakistan, it is unlikely that the Pakistani military's jihadi impulse will permit democratic forces to assert control in Islamabad. This complicates the scenario in South Asia, as al-Qaeda's central leadership in Pakistan is known to have worked with and without the support of jihadi forces in the Pakistani military.

In addition to the India-specific threat, Ustad Farooq also warned the Buddhists in Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. Urging Islamic scholars in Bangladesh "to step forward and help the oppressed Muslims living in their neighbourhood", he also warned the Myanmar government: "Don't think that the blood of Muslims will continue to flow like this."

The September 30 statement is also perhaps the most detailed policy document to emerge from al-Qaeda's top leadership in Pakistan with regard to South Asia. On the anniversary of 9/11 this year, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri vowed to liberate "occupied Muslim lands", including India. In short, al-Qaeda is developing its look-east policy for South and South-east Asia. Amid a series of Indian intelligence failures over the recent decades, such as those leading to the Kargil war and the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, India is totally unprepared to prevent terrorism on its soil.

## Tracing Al-Qaeda's Ideology

In the years since 9/11, commentators have rightly criticised al-Qaeda for its murderous ideology, and they argue that jihadists derive their arguments from Sayyid Qutb, an Islamist theoretician and author executed by Egypt in 1966. Last May, *The New York Review of Books* carried a piece on Qutb titled “The Father of Violent Islamism”. However, a review of articles and videos published by al-Qaeda and the Taliban does not indicate that jihadists cite Qutb; instead they develop arguments based on Quranic verses, Hadiths, or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, and incidents from early Islam.

Jihadist videos routinely begin with the following verse: “Fight them until there is no *fitna* and (until) the religion, all of it, is for Allah (alone).” Quranic verses have been interpreted by scholars differently, but according to jihadists, this verse urges Muslims to fight until all *fitna* – “corrupt” un-Islamic practices like polytheism – are eliminated and only Allah’s religion exists on the earth. In March, the Taliban released a video of militant commander Khalid Haqqani, who quoted a verse to justify the execution of Pakistani soldiers: “It is not (even) for a prophet to have captives (of war) until he inflicts a massacre (upon Allah’s enemies).” Jihadists have declared the Pakistani military apostate, or eligible to be terminated.

Scholars cite the following verse to argue that Islam is a moderate religion and guarantees protection to non-Muslims: “Let there be no compulsion in religion.” Jihadists agree that non-Muslims cannot be forcibly converted to Islam according to this verse. However, last month, a Taliban magazine argued that since the earth belongs to Allah, only a sharia rule must prevail, sharia being the Islamic legal way. It reasoned that non-Muslims must live under sharia rule and pay *jizya* (tax on non-Muslims) so that their security will be protected. It effectively means that Islam does not conceive a system in which non-Muslims can be part of the government.

The magazine also urged “offensive jihad” to eliminate non-Islamic systems.

Pakistani Taliban commander Abu Azaam was asked why jihadists do not “live and let live”. Azaam’s response was that the verse about “no compulsion in religion” is meant only for non-Muslims and Islam indeed sanctions force for implementing sharia. He quoted the Prophet Muhammad as saying that Muslims should beat their children when they are 10 years old to offer their prayers. Here, one must know that many Hadiths are considered weak and unreliable.

Islamic scholars have evolved a moderate interpretation of Islam by transcending the classification of *dar-ul-harb* (the land of war) versus *dar-ul-Islam* (the land of Islam), the former referring to non-Muslim countries and the latter denoting Muslim countries. They have, notably, evolved the concept of *dar-ul-amn*, the land of peace, to describe countries like India where Muslims coexist with non-Muslims. However, the Taliban magazine overturned this interpretation by developing a new concept of “a modern Muslim country” – arguing that borders of nation-states are invalid in Islam and if a Muslim country does not have sharia rule, it is indeed *dar-ul-harb*, against which jihad is justified.

Supporting coexistence with non-Muslims, moderate scholars cite a popular verse: “To you your religion, to me mine.” However, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, the chief of al-Qaeda’s preaching and media department for Pakistan, said recently that this verse was told to the non-Muslims of Mecca who had offered the Prophet Muhammad an opportunity to live with them. According to Farooq’s interpretation, the verse was not meant to support coexistence but to isolate Muslims from *mushrikeen*, or polytheists. After Punjab’s liberal governor, Salman Taseer, was shot dead by his guard, Farooq advocated a strong blasphemy law, arguing that the Prophet has three rights on Muslims: To believe in him to be the Prophet as ordered by the Quran, to love him, and to aid him. Arguing that the Prophet had no hesitation about killing anyone who disrespected him, Farooq noted that on the victory of Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad granted an amnesty, except for 10 men and women who he ordered to be killed for blaspheming him.

Moderates trace suicide bombings to Sri Lanka’s Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). However, Maulana Asim Umar, an al-Qaeda militant, recently favoured suicide bombings by citing early Islamic incidents: “(The Prophet Muhammad’s) female companions offered sacrifices for this religion, sacrificed their husbands for this religion, dressed their children in their finest attire and sent them to the



battlefield of jihad.” After the bombings at the Boston Marathon in April, a Taliban magazine cited early Islamic practices to justify “martyrdom missions” in which the fighters knew in advance of their certain death, notably among them the Prophet's companion Hisham ibn Amir, who plunged into enemy ranks. Citing the verse “And amongst mankind is he who sells himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah” to justify such acts, it advanced a new understanding of martyrdom missions as the “very purpose of life itself as created by Allah, which is to eliminate all non-Islamic systems.”

In Pakistan, moderates often blame General Zia-ul-Haq for Islamising Pakistani society, but much before him secular leaders like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto sowed the seeds of jihad by making Pakistan Studies a compulsory subject in schools or terming Ahmadi Muslims as non-Muslims. Globally, Sayyid Qutb is considered the father of jihadism, but there are grandfathers, too.

Professor Ashfaq Ahmad of Assam University, who was awarded the President of India's Maharishi Badrayan Vyas Samman for his contribution to Arabic this year, says that Islamic scholars interpret Arabic texts in a way that suits their ideological leanings, but this does not mean that jihadists' interpretations are necessarily right. Ahmad says: “Jihadists form 1 per cent of the Quran's interpreters while 99 per cent scholars are moderate who are not coming out as strongly as they should.” There has been some debate as to whether or not the Quran's invalid verses should be edited out. The 18th century Islamic scholar Shah Waliullah's contention was that many verses cannot be practised as they are cancelled out by verses revealed later, but as a sense of pragmatism prevailed, he said, these verses be retained in the Quran.

# Afghan Taliban's Shadow Over India

**A**fghanistan has a treacherous history. In 1839, Shah Shuja was anointed by the British as the ruler of Afghanistan. He was assassinated soon after the colonial masters left. As the United States pulls out its troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, the Taliban and al-Qaeda killing machine in Afghanistan is comprehensively capable of carrying out a few high-profile assassinations in Kabul, destabilising the country with Pakistani intelligence support and turning it into a jihadi haven that it was before 9/11.

Let us consider two hard facts in Afghanistan's near future. First, the Taliban and other militant organisations, notably the Hizb-e-Islami and al-Qaeda, are not defeated. Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri and his lieutenants remain sheltered in Pakistan. No signs exist that the Taliban's strength has diminished. A month ago, on December 13, they bombed a US military base in Kandahar soon after a visit by US Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta. Last August, an aircraft carrying General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, was damaged by a Taliban fire, though he was unhurt. Similar attacks have been carried out by the Taliban regularly, killing over 3,400 Afghan security men last year. Currently, an estimated 20,000 terrorists, a guerrilla force large enough to destabilise the country, roam about in Afghanistan.

Second, the US is hastening a near-total withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan by 2014. In fact, as Afghan President Hamid Karzai arrived in Washington on January 8 for talks, the US media's singular concern was whether 10,000 or as low as 2,500 troops should remain in Afghanistan after 2014. The White House put out feelers about withdrawing all the troops. The US media debate was unconcerned about Afghanistan's future or about the current terrorist threat emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Amid the emerging security vacuum, the Taliban and their allies are planning their next tactical steps, but it is pertinent here to first consider two positive enforcers of stability in Afghanistan and whether these are sustainable. One, because of the US military engagement with Afghanistan for 11 years, the Afghan National Army has emerged as a respectable organisation providing legitimacy to the government and creating hope for political stability in the country. The number of Afghan soldiers and policemen has grown to about 330,000. Increasingly, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are carrying out counterterrorism operations. Steadily, they have taken over security responsibilities in 23 of the 34 provinces in the country. Their combat readiness will be at risk without US air support or without help from allies like India to provide helicopters and other logistics.

Two, the Afghan parliament has emerged as a credible institution, with lawmakers holding the government accountable for its actions. However, Afghanistan's stability is threatened by several factors, including a lack of revenue to run the government, a likely failure to hold the 2014 elections on time and an inability of the Afghan security forces to sustain financially and without US air support. US military aid to Afghanistan after 2014 is vital, as the cost of sustaining the ANSF is projected at \$4.1 billion a year, twice the Afghan government's annual revenue, according to journalist Rajiv Chandrasekaran.

Ahead of the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, the Taliban's military strategy involves suicide bombings on key institutions, roadside bomb blasts, recruitment of sympathisers in the Afghan security forces, and so on. Politically, there are three levels of talks involving the militants. First, the Taliban have held talks with US officials in recent years, which they have dubbed as "contacts", aimed at prisoner exchange as a US soldier is in their captivity. Last year, when the Taliban opened an office in Qatar after the US released their prisoners from Guantanamo, they stated that they were in a pre-negotiation stage with the US and was not negotiating the political future of Afghanistan.

Second, the Taliban sent two envoys last month (December 2012) to Chantilly, France, to hold talks with representatives of the Afghan government and the Hizb-e-Islami. In Chantilly, they made it clear that they would not accept the current Afghan constitution for a political settlement.

Third, several contacts involving Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Taliban took place recently. A week after Afghanistan's High Peace Council, which is tasked with holding talks with militant groups, visited

Islamabad on November 14, Pakistan army chief General Ashfaq Kayani was in Kabul to ink a border security pact. Soon, Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmai Rassoul arrived in Islamabad to talk to his Pakistani counterpart Hina Rabbani Khar, who subsequently flew to Brussels to meet US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

This flurry of talks within a month and Pakistan's release of top Taliban prisoners point to a new understanding involving Pakistan and the Taliban, but it remains to be seen how it will impact government formation in Kabul in 2014. At present, these talks appear to be tactical moves by the Taliban.

At the end of Karzai's January 8-11 visit, President Barack Obama announced that by March the US will begin taking up a "support role" as the Afghan forces assume operational lead, but he did not declare the size of the troops to remain in Afghanistan beyond 2014. If the US decides to keep only 2,500 personnel in Afghanistan, it can secure just a few military bases, possibly at Bagram and Kandahar, leaving a vast swathe of southern and south-eastern Afghanistan unprotected. In this region, the Taliban have a strong presence, and their ability to survive as a guerrilla terrorist force in the mountainous terrain will remain unchallenged through the next decade.

The Afghan Taliban were apparently triumphant in 2014 and will certainly be aided by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and al-Qaeda, and also by Pakistan, as an Indian soldier's killing recently on the Line of Control in Kashmir indicates. The Taliban also plan to broaden their jihadi battlefield from Afghanistan through Pakistan to Kashmir and India, as stated by TTP commander Waliur Rehman in a January 6 video, an objective that the Pakistani intelligence shares. TTP emir Hakimullah Mehsud, speaking alongside Waliur Rehman, said that the TTP was an international organisation and offered support to militant groups in Arab countries. Mullah Omar was the leader not only of the Afghan Taliban but also of al-Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban, Mehsud stated, warning that after 2014, Omar's policies would define their jihadi objectives.

# Al-Qaeda in Pakistan

After the killing of Osama bin Laden in 2011, a question that has popped up before think tanks in Washington is: “Is al-Qaeda dead?” On October 16, 2012, Peter Bergen, author of several books on al-Qaeda, defending a debate motion that al-Qaeda stands defeated, uttered: “In the United States, an individual is ten times more likely to be killed by a dog than a jihadi terrorist.” Bill Roggio, a terrorism expert, countered it thus: “Dogs... don't plot attacks to kill Americans and to kill Muslims the way al-Qaeda does.” Some analysts, buoyed by bin Laden's killing, thought that al-Qaeda was fragmenting.

In July 2011, Leon Panetta, the US Defence Secretary and former chief of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), on his way to Kabul just weeks after bin Laden's killing, predicted that the US was “within reach of strategically defeating al-Qaeda”. However, the goal of al-Qaeda's strategic defeat appears thwarted by the diversification of its leadership roles at multiple levels. On 9/11, al-Qaeda's leadership was limited to Afghanistan; a decade later its organisational and decision-making capabilities have dispersed over many countries.

At a March 12, 2013, hearing of a US Senate Committee, US National Intelligence director James R. Clapper observed: “Terrorist threats are in a transition period as the global jihadist movement becomes increasingly decentralised.... The dispersed and decentralised nature of the terrorist networks active in the (Middle Eastern) region highlights that the threat to US and Western interests overseas is more likely to be unpredictable.”

Today, al-Qaeda remains a much more vibrant terrorist group than it was a decade ago, as more groups follow it. Last January, Iyad Ag Ghali, leader of the Mali-based Ansar al-Din, commented on how a group joins al-Qaeda: “The extreme belligerent logic against Muslims and their just issues, which has become the hallmark of international policy, pushes everyone to adopt al-Qaeda's *manhaj* (approach).”

Many al-Qaeda affiliates do not get instructions and funding from Ayman al-Zawahiri, but they share the jihadist objectives against the West. Despite al-Qaeda central being damaged by bin Laden's killing, several of its operational nuclei appear dangerous.

With a track record of lethal attacks, the following groups are more dangerous than the dented al-Qaeda central: the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI, which became ISIS subsequently), the Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria, Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) of North Africa, the Yemen-based Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen in Somalia. Formally, only four groups are part of Al-Qaeda: the ISI, the AQIM, the AQAP and the Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen, but others work as allies. Some formidable allies include the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Mali-based Ansar al-Din, Boko Haram and Ansaru of Nigeria and like-minded groups in the Caucasus and Gaza. Jihadist groups share a singular goal: the establishment of sharia emirates in their operational domains, which are expected to eventually constitute a global Islamic caliphate. Western jihadists, including from the US, Canada and Europe, are in their ranks.

Recently, the ISI (subsequently known as ISIS) and the Jabhat al-Nusra, which comprises over 7,000 fighters including Chechens in Syria, carried out deadly attacks. Reports indicate that jihadists of Indian origin from the United Kingdom are also fighting in Syria. While the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen of Somalia has come under pressure from an African Union force, the AQAP and the AQIM pose major threats to Western interests. Also, each of these groups consists of, not hundreds, but thousands of fighters. Jihadist groups are also exercising varying degrees of control over territories in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Mali, Somalia, Afghanistan and Pakistan. To imagine how al-Qaeda will look like in 10 years from now, consider these battlefields as combat-training grounds for future terrorist commanders.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the jihadi infrastructure remains unharmed. The al-Qaeda central group continues to survive in Pakistan. In July 2011, days before he handed over his command of Afghanistan, General David Petraeus said that 50 to 100 al-Qaeda militants were hiding in the Afghan provinces of Kunar and Nuristan. However, this figure is misleading as it refers to only foreign militants, generally Arabs and Chechens, and not the locals.

The Haqqani Network has launched spectacular attacks in Kabul and other cities. US officials have tried to depict the group as separate

from the Afghan Taliban, but the Islamic Emirate led by Mullah Mohammad Omar has rejected such portrayals as US propaganda aimed at dividing the Taliban. Sirajuddin Haqqani, the chief of the Haqqani Network, has stressed that his group is part of the Islamic Emirate. According to US officials, there are about 20,000 jihadi fighters in Afghanistan and about the same in Iraq; there are no signs that the number is falling anywhere.

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP, is dismissed as a Pakistani group, though its letterhead shows Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen, or leader of the faithful. It works alongside al-Qaeda and the Islamic Party of Turkistan. Hakimullah Mehsud, its emir, was a member of the group that executed the bombing of CIA's Khost base in 2009. Mehsud has reiterated that his group owes allegiance to Mullah Omar. Recently, he described the TTP as an international organisation. In May 2010, New York's Times Square was attacked by a militant recruited by Mehsud. In early 2013, media reports indicated that the TTP was recruiting jihadists from as far as Fiji.

In Pakistan, another group that works alongside TTP and al-Qaeda is Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Protected by government leaders in Punjab, it is systematically killing Shia Muslims, a goal shared by all jihadist groups. At his Senate testimony, James Clapper also warned that Lashkar-e-Taiba "will continue to be the most multifaceted and problematic of the Pakistani militant groups" and has the "long-term potential to evolve into a permanent... presence in Pakistan", like Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The US appears safe because of the extraordinary work of its aviation security officials, not because al-Qaeda has weakened. A recent report of the British-based Henry Jackson Society, which profiled 171 terrorists convicted in the US from 1997 to 2011, argues that the US homeland continues to face al-Qaeda threat.

## The Message from Burdwan

**T**he jihadist bloodshed in Pakistan is seen by Indian analysts erroneously as that country's problem. After the November 2 bombing at Wagah, an Indian official described it as “a fallout of schisms within the Pakistani apparatus”, planned to cause a rift between Islamabad and Delhi. In an editorial, a leading newspaper dubbed it as “an existential threat to Pakistan” and a “warning for Pakistan”. A blogger bought into the argument that the attack was a revenge for the Pakistani Army's Zarb-e-Azb operation (a major military offensive against various militant groups) in North Waziristan. However, the jihadist bloodshed in Pakistan is no longer Pakistan's problem. It is an Indian problem – and this is what the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) wants to achieve.

There are historical templates. One, over the past few years, protests in the Kashmir Valley were presented in the media as Kashmiris' struggle against human rights violations by the Indian Army. However, the nature of the protests reveals a pattern: these were based on the template of the Palestinian intifada, borrowed and executed by Pakistan. Two, in the late 1980s, when the jihad in Afghanistan was at its peak and the Soviets were set to quit the country, the ISI conceived its next jihad in Jammu & Kashmir. It led to over two decades of violence that the Indian Army had to fight, contain and curtail at considerable cost to its professional image. Three, after the 9/11 attacks delegitimised the Kashmir jihad, the ISI created the Indian Mujahideen to take the fight to the heart of India. This, too, has been mostly contained by Indian intelligence agencies.

Four, a few years ago, when the United States announced to the jihadis that it would quit Afghanistan by 2014-end, the ISI began executing its next jihad whose symptoms are becoming visible. In early September, Asmatullah Muawiya, the chief of Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab, declared ceasefire against Pakistan. The ISI convinced him to



focus on Afghanistan. Muawiya's ceasefire was followed by reports that he would work with the Haqqani Network of the Afghan Taliban led by Mullah Omar. That the ISI nurtures jihadists became evident when the Pakistan Army allowed militant commanders to move to Kurram Tribal Agency before launching the Zarb-e-Azb operation.

Compliant Taliban commanders like Khan Saeed Sajna stayed in North Waziristan during the operation. Leading Taliban commander Adnan Rasheed, who was captured in neighbouring South Waziristan, was quickly released by the ISI. It is not surprising as, in 2012, the ISI had shifted him from Rawalpindi prison to Bannu jail and got him freed in an attack orchestrated by the Taliban. These commanders, including al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, are working under Mullah Mohammad Omar, who is protected by the ISI, which protected Osama bin Laden. Also, the Zarb-e-Azb operation was organised to have the US release the funds to Pakistani Army it had blocked.

In September, as part of its post-2014 plan, the ISI got al-Zawahiri to announce the establishment of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Al-Qaeda is a branch of the Pakistani military, something quite perplexing to those unfamiliar with the affairs of Pakistan. Though led by Arab militants, al-Qaeda was created and nurtured in Pakistan. It spread to the Middle East from Pakistan and its central leadership remains protected by Pakistan. The AQIS is advancing the ISI's post-2014 strategy. It has declared its objective to establish an Islamic caliphate from Afghanistan to Bangladesh and beyond by erasing international borders created by the British. So, the Wagah border has become the new jihadist target.

It is a template borrowed from Pakistani intellectual traditions. From the early days through the 1980s, Pakistani leaders have thought of establishing a sphere of Islamic influence from Pakistan through Afghanistan to Central Asia. The ISI is implanting this template eastward. The Wagah attack connects with Burdwan in West Bengal, where young Muslim women and men were given arms training. An accidental blast on October 2 this year exposed everything. Al-Qaeda literature written in Bangla language found in Burdwan advocated the setting up of an Islamic caliphate covering Bangladesh and the bordering districts of West Bengal.

For now, India faces no threat of a magnitude it cannot deal with from al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), argued National Security Adviser Ajit Doval on October 21. Indeed, India must not wait for the problem to reach any magnitude. But officials in West Bengal did wait for the problem to acquire a magnitude. Much like the

pre-9/11 years when Britain tolerated the existence of jihadist forces in the name of anti-colonial politics, Bangladeshi jihadists found a liberal, secular and hospitable environment in West Bengal to hide, plan and grow. Such a tolerating environment, unavailable in Bangladesh, was easily available in India. The developments at Burdwan and Wagah originate from the ISI's post-2014 strategy. The Taliban, the AQIS and the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh are party to this strategy.

Doval also remarked: "There is nothing (like a) big or small threat. It is not on the basis of geography, but on the basis of the groups." But one has to keep in mind that in the jihadists' imagination, geography and *hijrah* (migration) do matter a lot. *Hijrah* denotes the Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Madina to establish the first Islamic state. It is a vital reason why Indian Muslims went to Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria in recent years.

Here is how the ISI hides its own role in jihad and insulates Pakistan's army. After the Wagah attack, it got the Umar Khalid Khorasani-led Taliban to say it was a revenge for the Zarb-e-Azb operation. After each turbulence in India-Pakistan ties, Pakistani journalists parrot the line that the army chief does not want to get involved in it.

To insulate Pakistan's army from global criticism after the Wagah attack, the ISI got a Christian couple burnt alive, successfully diverting public opinion. In recent years, Pakistan was globally criticised for its role in the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai. It is not very difficult to get the message from Burdwan: Have Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's assassination executed from Indian soil – fundamentally an ISI plan – so that India stops blaming Pakistan for the 26/11 attacks.

## Similarities Between 9/11 and 26/11 Attacks

**A**s the sixth anniversary of the 26/11 attacks approaches, India has to look out for primarily two kinds of jihadist terror threats. One, as a society, it is witnessing the radicalisation of some Muslim youth who are attracted to the jihadist call of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This radicalisation can be countered in ways consistent with India's vibrant democracy and pluralism and with the help of alert parents.

On November 22, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval told a conference in New Delhi that five to six youth had showed the "inclination" to join the ISIS, but their parents were the first to contact the security agencies in preventing them from doing so. Doval's optimism must be encouraged.

Second, as a state, India faces old as well as new jihadist threats from Pakistan. In September, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS).

The nature of 26/11 and 9/11 attacks reveal some interesting characteristics. Both appear to have been planned by a single person or organisation. On 9/11, jihadists launched airborne invasions of US cities. On 26/11, they launched a seaborne invasion of Mumbai. They used global positioning system (GPS) technology to guide planes and boats to reach their targets. This pattern was demonstrated for a third time on September 6, when the AQIS attempted to take over Pakistani frigate PNS Zulfiqar in order to use it to attack US and Indian warships on the high seas.

The three attacks – 9/11, 26/11 and September 6 – indeed reveal a deep connection between al-Qaeda and the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). On November 22, Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh, speaking a few hours before Ajit Doval made his statement, said in Delhi: "Terrorism in India is fully Pakistan-sponsored. Pakistan says non-state actors are involved. But is ISI a non-state actor?"

Although led by Arab terrorists, al-Qaeda is fundamentally a Pakistani organisation; it was formed in Pakistan in 1988; it is from Pakistan that it spread to the Middle East. Al-Qaeda is practically a branch of the ISI, which views itself as the ideological guardian of the Islamic state of Pakistan: both al-Qaeda and the ISI share the same ideological objective, i.e. the establishment of an Islamic caliphate, with the only difference being that the ISI wants Pakistan to be the head of such an international caliphate.

Evidence in the public domain demonstrates that the ISI and al-Qaeda function in close cooperation. The ISI protected Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad and continues to protect Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, who is also the topmost al-Qaeda leader given that all Taliban factions and al-Qaeda affiliates have expressed an oath of allegiance to him as Emir-ul-Momineen (leader of the ummah). Protecting bin Laden in Abbottabad was in tune with the ISI's established policy, which was also demonstrated in its protection of jihadist groups' headquarters in Muzaffarabad, Bahawalpur and Muridke.

While the Pakistan Army puts up a facade of military operations in the country's tribal region, militants of the Haqqani Network are found in Rawalpindi and not in Waziristan. In 2011, US military's top officer Admiral Mike Mullen described the Haqqani Network as the ISI's "veritable arm".

In the late 1980s, as the US was winding up its mission in Afghanistan and the Soviets were to about leave the country, the ISI planned its next jihad in Jammu & Kashmir which peaked through the 1990s. During the 2000s, it tried to take its jihad to India's heartland by using the Indian Mujahideen.

In 2014, as the US is winding up its mission in Afghanistan, the ISI appears to be mounting its next jihadist mission. The establishment of the AQIS means that al-Qaeda is being used to advance the ISI's post-2014 strategy.

Through its early days to the 1980s, Pakistan has sought to expand its sphere of Islamic influence through Afghanistan to Central Asia. It got Pakistani citizens recruited in Afghan government institutions in the 1990s when the Taliban were in power. Now, it is looking eastward through India to Bangladesh and Myanmar to establish an imaginary caliphate. The AQIS is the brainchild of Pakistan, not a product of the Arab mind.

Former ISI chiefs continue to work for the secret agency in informal capacities. Lieutenant General Zahirul Islam, who stepped down recently as ISI chief, is reportedly involved in the establishment of Bol

television channel. Lt. Gen. Shuja Pasha, another former ISI chief, was involved in directing the recent protests led by Imran Khan and Tahirul Qadri. Lt. Gen. Hamid Gul, on whose watch al-Qaeda was established in Peshawar in 1988, remains involved with the ISI. Many times, journalists who went to meet Gul were told that he had gone to the GHQ, the general headquarters of the Pakistan Army.

The use of jihadists in the Kargil war and the 26/11 attacks was planned when General Pervez Musharraf was in command. He would later elevate Gen. Ashfaq Kayani as the army chief, the first ISI chief to occupy that post.

To Indians, the ISI's involvement in the 26/11 attacks is clear. To the world, the 9/11 attacks have been blamed on al-Qaeda, as it is considered undiplomatic to accuse nation-states of such involvement without police-like obvious evidence.

ISI's footprints have been all too evident even before the 9/11 attacks. It was relatively a short period from the formation of al-Qaeda in 1988 to 1993, when the CIA headquarters at Langley and the World Trade Center (WTC) were first attacked. Al-Qaeda was not at its peak then, and the 1993 attacks could not have been carried out without some form of state support, especially since the footprints led back to Islamabad.

An excessive focus on footmen involved in specific jihadist attacks helps the ISI to escape global attention for its role in the 1993 attacks on WTC and Langley, or in the 9/11 and 26/11 attacks. Jihadist threats are only increasing.

The following developments appear to originate from a concerted strategy from the ISI. First, the AQIS was established to target India. Second, Punjabi Taliban chief Asmatullah Muawiya announced ceasefire against Pakistan, vowing to fight in Afghanistan. Third, the Pakistani media reported that Muawiya had joined hands with the Haqqani Network, which is part of the Afghan Taliban. Fourth, Pakistan's National Security Adviser Sartaj Aziz commented that terrorist groups that are not dangerous to Pakistan must not be targeted. Fifth, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif joined this ISI strategy when he announced that Pakistan would talk first with Kashmiri secessionists before any dialogue with India. The year 2014 is effectively 1988, when al-Qaeda was formed and the ISI's control of Pakistan's foreign policy was total.

# The Ghost of Osama bin Laden

**T**he nature of the jihadist threat to India is turning complex. In a video released on September 3, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of al-Qaeda's new branch in the Indian subcontinent. On television channels, Indian analysts have mostly dismissed al-Zawahiri's public statement as a desperate bid by al-Qaeda to renew its image following the murderous competition from the Islamic State, formerly the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It is true that al-Qaeda has not mounted a spectacular 9/11-style attack recently, but then 9/11-type attacks do not happen every day.

Al-Qaeda remains an agile terrorist network and its affiliates are executing attacks regularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia and elsewhere. These attacks do not get global attention because Western targets are not involved. The world knows that American journalist James Foley was beheaded by jihadists, but there have been no media reports about scores of other journalists killed in the Syrian conflict. For India's security purposes, it will be meaningless to make a distinction between the jihad launched by the ISIS, which is attracting Muslims from India, and the jihad of al-Qaeda, which is backed by sponsors operating from Pakistan.

## **Al-Qaeda's Look East Policy**

The establishment of al-Qaeda's new branch, al-Qaeda Jihad Organisation in South Asia, could have been forecast two years ago. In the wake of the anti-Muslim conflicts in Myanmar and Assam, al-Qaeda's central leadership based in Pakistan began evolving its "Look East" policy from mid-2012 onwards. In a statement issued in September 2012, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, who is the head of al-Qaeda's preaching and media department for Pakistan and has toured the West, including France, warned that the anti-Muslim riots "provide impetus

for us to hasten our advance towards Delhi". Sometime early this year, al-Qaeda's media arm As-Sahab established a media production unit for India called As-Sahab in South Asia.

While the establishment of al-Qaeda's new branch may not appear new, it does not mean that the threat to India is not strengthening. Al-Zawahiri's announcement means one thing: that more information will be available over the next few months on the extent to which al-Qaeda has succeeded in recruiting Indian Muslims. Just two days after al-Zawahiri's video was put out, it emerged that 23 Muslim youths from Manipur had left their homes to join this new branch of al-Qaeda. These media reports, based on intelligence sources, cannot be dismissed as baseless. In mid-2013, a new jihadist organisation called Ansar Ut-Tawheed Fi Bilad Hind (Supporters of Islamic Monotheism in India) emerged in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. Its videos of the past year show that about a dozen youths from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh have been training somewhere in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region.

To say that al-Qaeda's jihadist message is not succeeding in India would be to live in denial, though it appears that Muslim youths from India prefer the ISIS to al-Qaeda. There are enough indications of Indian Muslims responding to al-Qaeda's jihadist message. Over the past year and a half, Maulana Asim Umar, the emir (head) of al-Qaeda's new anti-India branch, released several videos urging Indian Muslims to join the global jihadist battlefields such as Yemen and Syria and asking Kashmiris to abandon stones in favour of Kalashnikovs. So, regardless of whether the jihad call is from al-Qaeda or the ISIS, the consequence is that more than a hundred Muslims from India are fighting in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. India is a huge country and one cannot expect Indian intelligence agents to be present everywhere all the time. The full extent of how many Indian Muslims have gone to these countries is unknown even to Indian intelligence agencies.

In the September 3 video, al-Zawahiri makes it clear that it took two years to establish the anti-India branch. "This is something what Pakistan always wanted to happen in emerging India," says Pakistani journalist Asif Magsi, who was on a media fellowship in Washington. He adds, "It's now overt to the world that the ISI and the Pakistan Army have close ties with al-Qaeda. The Pakistan Army provided a safe haven to the former al-Qaeda chief [Osama bin Laden] in its military backyard in Abbottabad. India and its allies must warn Islamabad for indirectly trying to sponsor terror in the region and India in general via al-Qaeda and jihadi outfits."

The Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is known for creating and nurturing terror groups to advance Pakistan's foreign policy objectives. The timing of al-Zawahiri's video is significant in that it came just days before the 9/11 anniversary.

As part of the video, there were two more speeches that the media has not paid much attention. One is by Maulana Asim Umar and the other by Ustad Usama Mahmoud, who has been appointed as the new branch's spokesman. Asim Umar traces the history of *qital* (fighting to kill) from the early Islamic era, cites a Quranic verse according to which the Prophet Muhammad was asked by Allah to march for jihad alone if need be without anybody else by his side, and goes on to narrate how Islam's first caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq, decided to wage jihad against those Muslims who would not pay their taxes. So, while Asim Umar's speech traces the legacy of what he calls "1,400 years" of *qital* and its jihadist message to Muslims, Usama notes that the first objective of the new organisation is "to wage jihad against America and the international order of *kuf* [unbelief] under its patronage" and the second objective is the enforcement of sharia through "every method", noting that, for this, *Qital Fi Sabeelillah* (fighting in the path of Allah) is the "topmost" method.

The jihadist thinking is that the second objective – of establishing sharia rule and a caliphate – cannot be achieved unless the United States-led international order is destabilised. In fact, in issue VI of the Taliban magazine *Azan*, released last August, jihadists described the pre-9/11 strategy of al-Qaeda as successful. In a cover story, the magazine was specific in advocating a policy of entangling America in wars initiated by jihadists so that American resources could be stretched thin. "We have to spread our attacks on American interests throughout the world," it urged its followers. Jihadists view democracy as antithetical to Islam, and in their minds, India is the new America and part of a US-led international order of democracies.

### **Al-Qaeda as a Branch of Pakistani Military**

To some extent, India can indeed prevent and counter ISIS-led radicalisation, but as a state it needs to worry about the al-Qaeda threat more than about self-motivated, home-grown jihadists. A careful examination of the nature of al-Qaeda reveals a worrying aspect. The al-Zawahiri video has another timeline in its sight, the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan by end 2014, and is therefore aligned with the Pakistani military's strategic objective aimed at reacquiring control



over Afghanistan through the Taliban as the US leaves. This strategic objective is part of the ISI's vision of a broader Islamic state. It is about time the Indian security establishment understood the nature of this security threat: al-Qaeda is essentially a branch of the Pakistani military.

The facts on the ground are clear. Although it has been led by Arab militants, al-Qaeda is a Pakistani organisation; it has been nurtured and sustained there. It is from Pakistan that it has spread to the Middle East and Africa. Its central leadership is housed there. It is now established beyond doubt that Osama bin Laden was comprehensively protected by the Pakistani military. Al-Qaeda was founded on the watch of the ISI when it was controlling and executing the Afghan jihad in the 1980s. If you look at the nature of the 9/11 attacks on New York and the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai, the two appear to have been planned by a single person; in the case of 9/11, they decided to launch airborne invasions of American cities, and on 26/11, they decided to mount seaborne attacks on Mumbai: in both cases, GPS technology was used to plan the terror attacks in order to alter the course of international politics. In the case of 9/11, it was meant to damage the global economic system, and in Mumbai, the goal was to reshape India-Pakistan ties.

This argument that the 9/11 and 26/11 attacks were planned by a single person in the ISI is buttressed by the fact that several former ISI chiefs continue to work for the Pakistani intelligence, among them Lieutenant General Hamid Gul and Lieutenant General Shuja Pasha, both retired. The latter has been reportedly appointed as the regional chief of the United Arab Emirates' intelligence agency. Journalists working in Pakistan have reported in the international media that on many occasions when they went to meet Hamid Gul in recent years, he had gone to the Pakistani military headquarters. It should be noted that Gul was the ISI chief when al-Qaeda was established in Peshawar in 1988. Pakistan's Urdu press reported recently that Shuja Pasha was coordinating the minute details of the protest marches by cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan and Islamic scholar Maulana Tahirul Qadri. This indicates that the forces which protected Osama bin Laden are indeed thriving.

Another dimension of the situation is that at least theoretically, and in terms of strategic planning, Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar is indeed the topmost al-Qaeda leader. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri offered *bai'yah* (oath of fealty) to Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen, or the leader of the faithful Muslims. Mullah Omar is considered Emir-ul-Momineen by al-Qaeda affiliates across the

world and all Taliban factions. A few years ago, when the US threatened to launch drone attacks in Balochistan, the ISI was so worried about Mullah Omar's safety that it moved him from Quetta to Karachi. Much like bin Laden, Mullah Omar is also comprehensively protected by the ISI. Although al-Qaeda's many affiliates work in independent operational domains within their geographical area, there is no doubt that in the Indian subcontinent, al-Qaeda functions as a branch of the Pakistani military.

In an interview with *Azan* in May 2013, former Pakistan Air Force (PAF) engineer and now leading Taliban commander Adnan Rasheed noted the existence of a secret organisation called Idara-tul-Pakistan (the Institution of Pakistan) in the Pakistani military; its purpose, he pointed out, is to nurture jihadist networks across Pakistan's navy, army and air force. In the interview, Rasheed recounted a comment he made to his boss at Idara-tul-Pakistan while speaking about members of Jaish-e-Muhammad led by Maulana Masood Azhar: "We are soldiers in uniform and they are soldiers without uniform", both reporting to the ISI.

All Pakistani and foreign security analysts are of the view that the Pakistani military indeed has a bedrock of jihadist ideas to its strategic thinking. Former PAF chief Air Marshal Asghar Khan is on record saying that Pakistan initiated all the four wars against India and lost them all. Amid this history of defeats, Pakistan appears to have lost all hope of winning a conventional military conflict with India and is therefore working on a policy of bleeding India through jihadist organisations such as Jaish-e-Muhammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and al-Qaeda. At this time, the ISI may be specially inspired by the ISIS's spectacular success in Iraq, and in its scheme of things al-Qaeda is a readily available resource.

In the video, al-Zawahiri stated that the purpose of the new organisation in the Indian subcontinent is to erase the international borders demarcated by the British in 1947 so that a larger Islamic state could be established. For close observers of Pakistan, this objective of al-Qaeda is essentially shared by the Pakistani military and its ISI, a jihadist organisation that doubles up as an intelligence agency but imagines itself as the ideological guardian of the Islamic state of Pakistan. It is relevant to know that Pakistan is described by Pakistani thinkers as "Medina-e-Sani", or second Medina, the first being the Islamic state established by the Prophet Muhammad. At this point in time, by establishing a specialised terror machine aimed at India, al-Qaeda is essentially advancing the ISI's objectives in India and across South Asia.

It was always clear to close observers of Pakistan that the ISI would plan something for 2014-end, when US troops leave Afghanistan. In the video, al-Zawahiri appears well fed and in robust health; the task cut out for international intelligence agencies is to search for him in Rawalpindi, where the Pakistani military headquarters are situated, not in caves and mountains.

### **India Needs Counter-Radicalisation Measures**

The jihadist threat must be put into perspective: terrorists cannot take over our governments and countries. At most, they will mount some attacks like those in Jammu & Kashmir or those undertaken by the Indian Mujahideen in several parts of India, or try the occasional spectacular attack like the 26/11 one in Mumbai. However, what is obvious is that the current generation of jihadists is ideologically motivated and are not hiding in caves, mountains or jungles. There is nothing surprising that Indian Muslims are attracted to them; it was always expected that a few Indians would be attracted to the ideology of jihad someday. However, there are ways to prevent and counter radicalisation among Muslims in India.

Indians must laud the parents from Hyderabad who displayed exemplary courage, wisdom and foresight in alerting police officials that their sons were headed for Iraq to join the ISIS. Those youths were held in Kolkata and those parents must appreciate how this saved their sons. However, a wave of so-called political correctness and denial is sweeping Indian society. On “We the People”, a TV show hosted by journalist Barkha Dutt and telecast on September 7, 2014, this writer heard first-hand outright denials by both Hindu and Muslim analysts that there is an al-Qaeda threat to India. Leading Islamic scholar Maulana Mahmood Madani presented the case of the youth who were stopped in Kolkata as if they had gone to play football, not for their onward journey to Iraq.

The fact that the police let them off after some questioning means that security officials are indeed handling such issues sensitively. Islamic scholars like Mahmood Madani and Maulana Salman al-Husaini Nadwi of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, who wrote a congratulatory letter to ISIS chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, should take a lesson from the parents of these Hyderabad youths. Notwithstanding the denials and secular political correctness associated with the issue of terror in India, and the excessive politicisation of India's national debate on counter-extremism, the Indian security establishment must

remain professionally alert to the emerging threat from jihadists. The global jihad has been seeping into Indian society for several years, but its symptoms are beginning to emerge only now. Pakistan's ISI, al-Qaeda and the ISIS sure have their work regarding India cut out for them.

India needs to undertake the following measures on priority: One, the Indian legal system is far behind the global jihadists, who are highly educated and are fully aware of political freedoms and legal limitations of free societies like the United States, the United Kingdom and India to prosecute them. India must enact a counter-radicalisation law. Authoritarian and theocratic states like China and Saudi Arabia can fight terrorists with the power of crude force. However, India is an open society and a thriving democracy. Its law-abiding citizens are determined to bring up their children in an environment of personal liberty. At least half of India's 1.25 billion people are under the age of 25 years; 65 per cent of the population is below 35. This is an entirely new political population, which does not connect with the emotional turmoil of Partition and can barely remember the effects of the Emergency. This young population has grown up essentially in a culture of liberty. Counter-radicalisation legislation will plug the legal loopholes in the system, aid Indian citizens in defending their legitimate personal liberties, and vitally empower India's security agencies.

Two, Indian security agencies can learn some lessons in counter-radicalisation from democratic countries. In the US, counter-radicalisation got a boost with sting operations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). India must introduce FBI-style sting operations to prevent sleeper cells on its streets. But sting operations cannot succeed without strengthening India's legal framework. Laws should also be in place to prosecute terrorist acts by Indian citizens outside the Indian soil. In the US, individuals trying to contact terrorists can be prosecuted; in the UK, anyone other than counterterrorism researchers can be jailed for downloading jihadist videos and literature. It is hard for investigating agencies in India or elsewhere to produce police evidence against terrorists, which results in their acquittal by courts on technical grounds. Sting operations can go a long way in aiding intelligence and prosecution officials in collecting admissible evidence.

Three, intelligence agencies in India must keep in mind that fake encounters cannot be acceptable to the Indian republic and may prove counterproductive, though it is a fact that security officials will find themselves in situations of genuine encounters. Fake encounters

morally corrode police forces and intelligence agencies from within; they destroy the moral fibre of the society to fight back against the menace of terrorism; and in the long run they can destroy us as a nation with a moral purpose in the world. Fake encounters also alienate good-intentioned Muslim parents who want to save their sons from turning jihadist. Parents like the aforementioned in Hyderabad are the first line of defence against jihadism in society. Jihadist terror is also a moral challenge, and counterterrorism measures must be well within India's constitutional framework.

# Al-Qaeda's Strategy for South Asia

**H**aving declared the Pakistani military as an apostate force (one that has left the fold of Islam), al-Qaeda appears to be intent on damaging the Pakistan Army's image in the eyes of Pakistani Muslims, assassinating its senior officers through selective killings, and following the drawdown of American forces from Afghanistan in 2014 annihilating the institution of Pakistan Army thoroughly and executing its personnel for collaborating with the United States. The growing focus of al-Qaeda on undermining the Pakistan Army is becoming evident from messages contained in its statements and in a series of videos released this year.

Al-Qaeda's targeting of Pakistan Army was underlined again in Issue No. VIII of *Inspire*, an English-language jihadi magazine published by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Issues No. VIII and IX of *Inspire* were released on jihadist internet forums on May 2, 2012, the first anniversary of the killing of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

A study of the al-Qaeda statements and videos reveals that its analysts are questioning the historical relationship of the Pakistan Army with Muslims through the past three centuries – back at least to the Battle of Plassey in 1757, or 190 years before the Islamic state of Pakistan was created in 1947. At the Battle of Plassey, the British defeated the Muslim army of Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, whose commander Mir Jafar was part of a conspiracy to defeat the Nawab. Some al-Qaeda videos have recently pointed out that the Pakistan Army has been killing Muslims both before the creation of Pakistan in 1947 and after, for example, in the 1971 Bangladesh war and the anti-Taliban military operations under way in the Pakistani tribal region.

It appears that al-Qaeda is seeking to achieve two objectives through this strategy: first, damage the image of the Pakistan Army in the eyes of Muslims worldwide but especially in Pakistan; second, divide the loyalty of Pakistani soldiers to their commanders and recruit

them to the cause of jihad and Islam. The new al-Qaeda strategy poses a serious risk for the Pakistani armed forces. This risk is not unreal, as several large-scale terror attacks have taken place in Pakistan recently, revealing the involvement of Pakistani soldiers.

Al-Qaeda leaders began reviewing the role of the Pakistan Army a few years ago – perhaps the first trigger being the killing of Arab fighters in Pakistani military operations in the tribal region along the Afghan border.

In July 2010, Al-Sahab, the media arm of al-Qaeda, released a comprehensive interview of Ustad Ahmad Farooq, the head of al-Qaeda's department for dawa and media in Pakistan. In the interview, he discussed the role of the Pakistan Army in the war on terror and offered justifications for jihad against Pakistan, arguing: "One who can understand jihad against America should also be able to understand the jihad in Pakistan for the reason that both Afghanistan and Pakistan are in effect the same battlefield...."

Ustad Farooq added: "If the Afghan National Army – whose strength is not even one-fourth of the Pakistani Army's, and whose military experience, military equipment and weapons, and professionalism cannot be in any way compared with the Pakistani Army's – if battle against it is justified for this crime [of supporting the US troops], and if all the mujahideen fighting for the Islamic Emirate [the Taliban's shadow government] target it and no objection is raised, then why isn't a battle against the Pakistani Army justified?...."

He further argued: "Is it hidden from anyone that a few years ago this region was not in the situation that it is in now? Today, from Afghanistan to Pakistan, there is war everywhere. And if there is a force that is fundamentally responsible for throwing this entire region into bloodshed and war, it is the Pakistani Army. When the US decided to launch an attack here [following 9/11], it needed a local host to support it.... No neighbour of Afghanistan was ready to play this role.... It was Pakistan that activated its airspace, territory, airbases, centres and everything to be available for America. The precious information of the [Pakistani military's] intelligence department needed for all operations and all the secrets of the Islamic Emirate and mujahideen were provided to America...."

In March 2012, Ustad Ahmad Farooq outlined his justification for jihad against the Pakistan Army, arguing that 10 senior Taliban leaders were in the Pakistan Army's detention. Speaking in an al-Qaeda video, he cited the name of the following Taliban commanders in Pakistani jails: Mullah Baradar, the deputy of Taliban leader Mullah Omar;

Mullah Obaid, the deputy of Mullah Baradar; Ustad Yasir; Mullah Jahangirwal Zabuli, aide of Mullah Omar; Mullah Anwarul Haq Mujahid, son of Mullah Younus Khalis; Mullah Mir Ahmadwakul of Jalalabad; Mullah Abdul Salam of Kunduz; Mullah Muhammad of Baghlan; Mullah Turabi of *Amr bil Maaroof Nahi Wa Nahi Anil Munkir*; Mullah Mansoor Dadullah, brother of Mullah Dadullah.

In January 2012, a video released by the Umar Media of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which works in an interconnected manner with al-Qaeda, also questioned the role of the Pakistan Army in defending Muslims. A narrator, who did not appear on the video, said: "[The Pakistan Army] is an 'apostate' as it acts on the directives of infidel forces and has been killing mujahideen to protect the interests of American-led NATO allies in Afghanistan and the rest of the world. It called itself the front-line ally of America in the so-called war against terrorism – which in fact is the American war to silence voices for jihad and sharia enforcement."

The narrator added: "The very foundation of its army was laid down by Britain soon after Pakistan came into existence on the world map in 1947." He reminded that the first two chiefs of this apostate army were British generals; General Ayub Khan had got commission from Royal Military Academy of Britain. And all other top officers, Muhammad (1935), Yahya Khan (1939), Gul Hassan (1942), Tikka Khan (1940) and Zia-ul-Haq (1943), got commission from the Indian Military Academy during the British rule.

"This [Pakistan] Army has been defeated by Indian forces in 1965, 1971, and all other fronts like Kargil episode [war in 1999]. But these coward armed forces went to every extent to crush the people of Bangladesh [former East Pakistan in 1971], kill innocent people of Balochistan [even now], crush the valiant sisters of Jamia Hafsa [Islamic seminary during a 2007 army operation in Islamabad] when they raised voices for the enforcement of Sharia and martyrdom, or the patriotic people of the tribal areas...."

A masked militant in the video stated: "Respected Muslims, these apostate security forces are nominal Muslims. At the behest of America, they treated mujahideen brutally, threw their bodies... into rivers in Swat and martyred madrassas [Islamic seminaries], mosques and houses in Waziristan tribal region. They committed acts of blasphemy by throwing copies of the Quran and other holy books on ground in mosques during military operations. Most of these soldiers are Shias or Ismailis [who are not considered Muslims by the Taliban] and the rest are nominal Muslims promoting the infidels' agenda."



### **Questioning the Role of the Pakistani Army**

In March 2012, a new video, which was produced by Al-Sahab, traced the Pakistan Army's role "against Muslims" over the past century in Iraq, Palestine, Delhi, Pakistani tribal regions, and Bangladesh, accusing it of killing Muslims and causing wounds to the Muslim ummah throughout history.

In the video, a narrator reminds viewers that the Pakistan Army's role in killing Muslims is not new, adding: "The regiments of this army [Pakistan Army, or erstwhile Indian Army] won Baghdad and Mosul for the British in the World War I; sent 1,500,000 of its soldiers to defeat the Ottoman Empire; attacked and helped establish the Crusader-Zionist occupation in the pious land of Palestine where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) led the prophets [in prayer]."

He noted that the Pakistan Army units also killed the followers of Syed Ahmed Shaheed, the militant Islamic cleric who led the Pashtun tribes to wage jihad against the British in the early 19th century and killed thousands of Islamic clerics and trampled the "jihad for freedom" against the British rule in 1857, the first war of Indian independence fought by Muslim and Hindu kings and queens as well as by jihadist forces.

That video contained clips and images of Pakistani soldiers mistreating Pakistani people, launching air raids in the Pakistani tribal region in recent years, the erstwhile Indian/Muslim soldiers fighting alongside the British in 1857 against Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal ruler of Delhi, and entering Palestine alongside their British generals. On the video, Pakistani senator from Balochistan Ismail Baladi was shown confirming how Balochi leaders were being killed by Pakistan Army soldiers in broad daylight in recent years.

The significant point about this video was that it traced the role of the Pakistani army both before the creation of Pakistan in 1947 and after, producing footage from American television channels' archives showing how Pakistani soldiers killed Bengali Muslim youth in hundreds of thousands in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in the 1971 war. This particular video also produced clips from NBC TV channel archives showing how Bengali Muslim women, some as young as 13 years old, were kept in barracks and raped by Pakistani soldiers only to give birth to children they did not want.

The al-Qaeda video also contained a clip of a respected Pakistani politician, Javed Hashmi, describing his sorrowful experience of witnessing the killing of Bengali Muslims by Pakistani soldiers: "Allah is

witness, my guilty eyes have seen vultures eating the intestines of Bengalis [Muslims], and they [the Pakistani soldiers] were telling happily that many days had passed and we had not killed Bengalis and now that Bengali had come and we have killed [them]." It also showed journalists such as Syed Saleem Shehzad and common people being killed in broad daylight by the Pakistan Army in Karachi and other Pakistani regions.

Ustad Sher Alam, an al-Qaeda militant who appeared on the video with his face masked, wondered why Pakistani journalists and political analysts failed to see the Pakistan Army's role against Muslims, stating in Urdu language: "We want to ask these analysts, haven't they read the history of this army? Can't they understand this simple fact that the units of this army played a singular role alongside the British in the World War I in handing over Palestine and Al-Aqsa mosque to these infidels; and were at the front in the war against the centre of Muslims and end of the Ottoman Empire...?"

In March 2012, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the successor to al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, appeared in a video to speak in justification of the jihad against Pakistan and the Pakistan Army. In the video, which was recorded sometime in the aftermath of the US raid on the Salala check post on November 26, 2011, in which 24 Pakistani soldiers were killed, al-Zawahiri sought to play on the Pakistani people's anti-US sentiments, stressing that the US cannot be a reliable partner and urging people to rise up against the Pakistan Army. Specifically addressing the people of Pakistan, al-Zawahiri stated:

"The history of America's dealings with the Shah of Iran, [former Pakistan Army ruler General Pervez] Musharraf, Zain ul Abidin Bin Ali, Hosni Mubarak, and Ali Abdullah Saleh proves that America views its agents as if they are mere hunting dogs or worn-out shoes used to fulfil its objectives and then thrown into the dustbin; and this indeed is the fate awaiting the generals of the Pakistan Army.

"The Pakistan Army permitted American air strikes in the tribal areas. It provided help and active support in these bombings and continues to do so. What did it get in return? The Pakistan Army carried out gruesome military operations involving aerial bombings and outright murder in Swat, Waziristan, Mohmand, Orakzai and Khyber in the interest of America. What did it get in return?

"Earlier, the Pakistan Army supported the Crusader attack on Afghanistan and it continues to do so. Thousands of Muslims were killed in this attack and more are still being killed. What did it get in return? The Pakistan Army arrested thousands of Pakistani and Afghan

mujahideen in addition to immigrant brothers. It tortured them, murdered some, and handed others over to America. What did it get in return?

"Senior officers of the army have been bred on American bribes. They have been trained to submit to America's desires and transgressions. Haven't these generals made a business out of the Kashmir issue for 60 years, and used it as a pretext to plunder the wealth of the Pakistani people, without freeing even an inch span of Kashmir?...

"Follow in the footsteps of your brothers in Egypt, who take to Tahrir Square again and again by the millions to force the Military Council [Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, or SCAF] to meet their demands. Cannot a million free and noble people rise from amongst the Muslims of Pakistan to stage a protest against the generals of the Pakistan Army so as to force them to stop their betrayal of the Muslim ummah by participating with America in its war against Islam, to compel them to stop drone strikes, and to pressure them to end the military operations in the tribal areas and Swat and to release all prisoners?"

In March 2012, Al-Sahab released a video of pre-recorded statements of four martyrdom-seeking bombers of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who carried out the May 2011 suicide attack on the PNS Mehran, the headquarters of Pakistan Navy in Karachi, as revenge for the killing of bin Laden.

The video was released in two parts, with the first part tracing the role of the Pakistan Army against Muslims in the Pakistani tribal region and Bangladesh, and before the independence from British rule, in Iraq, Delhi, and Palestine. Although Pakistan did not exist before 1947, the argument forwarded by al-Qaeda's analysts is that Muslim soldiers from India's north-western territory, which became Pakistan, were part of the British-led Indian Army, which took part in missions in Iraq and Palestine in the World War I and World War II.

In the video, one of the suicide bombers read a statement declaring: "The rulers and generals of this country, who sell their beliefs and faith just for the sake of dollars, remember that you will get tired of fighting us but we will not tire of fighting you, Allah willing."

An audio clip was also part of the video, in which Ustad Ahmad Farooq urged the Pakistani soldiers to rise: "Isn't there a self-respecting soldier in this army of 600,000 who considers the orders of the Prophet [Muhammad] as dearer to him than the orders of his officers?" He added: "If the army units of Libya could rebel against [Mu'ammara] al-Qadhafi and the Sunni soldiers of the Syrian Army against Bashar

al-Assad, then why can't the lower-ranking soldiers of the Pakistan Army rebel against their generals in order to free the 180 million people [of Pakistan] from this slavery, and for the enforcement of Islamic sharia?"

Issue No. VIII of *Inspire*, which was released on May 2, 2012, carried an article by a former Pakistani soldier who has been identified as Abu Obaidah Al-Islamabadi. The article titled "Lust & Fear: An Insight into the Pakistan Army & Its Role in the Crusades" was submitted by a reader, but nevertheless is an endorsement of al-Qaeda's thinking on the role of the Pakistan Army.

In the article, the writer notes the pride of Pakistani generals in tracing their history back to 1757, the Battle of Plassey. He writes: "One day, while together on a military exercise, a Major from 1 Frontier Force Regiment of Pakistan Army showed me his diary. It was a meticulously crafted personal notebook but what really intrigued me was a list on its initial pages. The list contained the names of all the commanding officers of 1 Frontier Force Regiment in a chronological order and to my surprise, the list was dating back to the year 1757. This was the year when British East India Company captured Bengal in a major battle against the Muslim ruler Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah at Plassey [near Kolkata, India]. 'So, your Battalion fought against the Muslims in 1757?' I asked the Major. A glitter of pride appeared in his eyes, 'Yes, and the British government and military acknowledge our services till today!'"

It is not inconsistent that al-Qaeda is tracing the history of the Pakistani army back to 1757. Generally, Pakistani writers, especially those on the side of the Pakistani establishment, have sought to trace the history of Pakistan at least back to 711 CE, when Muhammad bin Qasim, an Islamic general from Saudi Arabia, began the conquest of Sindh, a territory now in Pakistan. Now, al-Qaeda is utilising this established Pakistani narrative to argue that Muslim soldiers, who formed part of Indian Army before Pakistan's creation and are now the part of Pakistan Army, have been involved in the killing of Muslims.

"The unequivocal loyalty and subordination of today's Pakistani army to the anti-Muslim Crusader alliance may surprise some people, but it is a historical fact that the troops from this area have always been loyal to the British and were especially instrumental in undermining the independence movement by other Indians in 1857. The forefathers of present day's Pakistan Army under the leadership of British commander Brigadier General John Nicholson were mobilised from North Western India (present day Pakistan) to fight against Indian freedom fighters who were trying to restore the authority of the Muslim Mughal Emperor in Delhi."

The author further notes: "After 1857, the forefathers of the present day Pakistan Army have also fought against the Muslims under the leadership of the British in the second Afghan war (1878-80) as well as in the First and Second World Wars. Participation of these so-called 'Muslim troops' in the First World War is of great importance as they helped the British abolish the Islamic Caliphate completely for the first time in the 1,400-year history of Islam. These 'Muslim troops' participating in the World Wars were strongly supported by pro-British 'Muslim' politicians such as Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the man who was to later become the founder of Pakistan...."

### **Jihadist Propaganda**

Abu Obaidah Al-Islamabadi, the author of the article "Lust & Fear: An Insight into the Pakistan Army & Its Role in the Crusades", further questions the psychology of Pakistani soldiers, arguing that they work as mercenaries or "peacekeepers" as part of the United Nations. Perhaps unintentionally, the role of Pakistani security forces in Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries, especially in curbing Shia protesters in Bahrain, is not cited by the author. Following are excerpts from the article:

"The soldier of the Pakistani Army primarily fights for money and he justifies his moral corruption by taking pride in another un-Islamic concept of 'patriotic nationalism'. The salary of a Pakistani soldier is carefully determined. It is slightly higher than the salary of other government employees but still much lower than the Western Crusader troops. Resultantly, for higher salary, Pakistani soldiers would happily serve as paid mercenaries, anywhere in the world and under any conditions. For their conscience, it does not matter if they are asked to fight against Muslim mujahideen, or they have to safeguard the Crusaders' interest under the banner of United Nations' 'peacekeepers' at various places around the world.

"The Pakistan Army's lust for money has been acknowledged many times in the past by their Crusader masters. The Pakistan Army's lust for money and its justification through nationalism were clearly demonstrated during the tyrannical rule of Pervez Musharraf when he raised the slogan 'Pakistan comes first'. Following this satanic concept, the Pakistani Army martyred a considerable number of precious non-Pakistani [Arab and other] mujahideen residing in Pakistan and many were sold to the Crusaders....

"If there is a voice to implement the Shari'ah within the Army or country, it is met with extreme brutality with the silent consent of the

Western powers; examples of which are the assassination of late President Zia-ul-Haq and the massacre of Islamabad's Red Mosque [military operation in 2007]....

"The Crusaders keep their influence over Pakistan's Army by controlling a few handpicked elite Generals who in turn exert their control over the whole army mainly through training curriculum and military laws. The process of moral corruption starts at the very beginning of the training....

"Right from the induction into Pakistan's Army, recruits are made to idolise the Crusader armies as the height of professional excellence. As an incentive, top cadets from the Pakistan Military Academy are sent to Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, UK, for further training. A major portion of military educational curriculum taught in the Pakistan Army institutions is based upon campaigns and tactics of the Allied Armies during the World Wars. Officers who perform well in these institutions are promoted to higher ranks and further selected for foreign courses in the military institutions primarily in USA and UK where their loyalties to the Crusader armies are further ascertained....

"After grooming the suitable Pakistani Army officers, the Crusaders lift them to the position of Generals and then control them through the carrot and stick policy. If Generals follow the agenda of their masters, they are showered with wealth and praises and if the Generals are not efficient in performing their job, they are rebuked with the threats of assassination....

"In the light of the above, it can be deduced that the Crusaders' occupation of Afghanistan is standing on its historical asset, the Pakistani Army. Until the Pakistani Army is standing and guarding the supply routes, the Crusaders are in the position to continue this war for a considerable length of time leading to further bloodshed of Afghani and Pakistani Muslims. Hence, in order to bring down Crusaders' military structure, it is important to strike a decisive blow to its pillar: the Pakistani Army.

"Hence, the dealings with the Pakistani Army should be met with considerable terror and an effort should be made to publicise the retaliatory atrocities caused by them. Their senior officers should be assassinated through targeted killings. Once this Army is fearful of mujahideen, it would not be able to protect the Crusaders' supply lines, airbases, soldiers and private contractors in Pakistan who could then be targeted relatively easily leading to an ischaemia of [or cure against] the Crusader armies in Afghanistan.

"After the Crusaders withdraw from Afghanistan [in 2014], Pakistan's Army should be thoroughly annihilated and its personnel, who were complicit with the Crusaders, should be tried and executed publicly...."

In the months following the killing of bin Laden in Abbottabad in May 2011, al-Qaeda's statements on the Pakistan Army's relationships with Muslims became more frequent. This trend is likely to continue in the coming years, especially if the Pakistani military continues to carry out security operations against the Taliban and other militant groups in the Pakistani border region.

The message against the Pakistan Army is coming not just from top al-Qaeda leaders. The fact that the video of suicide bombers after the PNS Mehran attack questioned the role of Pakistani generals indicates that lower-ranking militants in the TTP, al-Qaeda, and allied groups are being persuaded to comprehend the Pakistan Army's relationship with Muslims in a historical context – as having been essentially harmful to Muslims throughout history.

The issue of *Inspire*, which contained the article "Lust & Fear: An Insight into the Pakistan Army & Its Role in the Crusades", was produced by the AQAP, an affiliate of al-Qaeda based in southern Yemen. It is likely that al-Qaeda groups in various countries are studying the role of the Pakistan Army in a historical context. Since al-Qaeda affiliates are getting stronger across the world, there could be two consequences in the long term: some militants could move to Pakistan to fight against the Pakistan Army, and more research questioning the Pakistan Army's relationship with Muslims could be published by Islamist groups worldwide. The threat to annihilate the institution of the Pakistan Army – though not an easy task for al-Qaeda – cannot be taken lightly as terrorist organisations are expected to find a surplus of jihadists in the Afghanistan and Pakistan region after the drawdown of US and NATO troops from Afghanistan in 2014.

However, the fact that al-Zawahiri and Ustad Ahmad Farooq are making considerable efforts to justify al-Qaeda's jihad against the Pakistan Army by issuing long statements and interviews also reveals a significant point: the al-Qaeda leadership realises the difficulty of persuading the people of Pakistan to adopt its viewpoint on jihad, which will require Pakistanis to see no geographical barriers across Muslim communities in the world, abandon their own loyalty to the idea of Pakistan and thereby lose their own identity as Pakistanis – which is extremely difficult to occur.





# **SECTION III**

## **Radicalisation Among Indian Muslims**



# Threat to Indian Muslims

India's vibrant democratic experience over the past six decades has been difficultly nurturing an open society for its people, but there are injurious intellectual streams in our midst which are radiating darkness among Indian Muslims. The disturbing case here is of Maulana Salman al-Husaini Nadwi, an internationally recognised Islamic scholar who decided against this country's collective wisdom to write a letter to greet Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of murderous jihadists who overran Iraq's cities in June, butchered human beings in hundreds, and demolished shrines revered by Shias and Sunnis alike, and expelled Christians from Mosul.

Al-Baghdadi is a terrorist who trained in the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan along with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda leader in Iraq, who was killed by an air strike by the United States in 2006. On June 29 this year, al-Baghdadi declared himself the caliph of Muslims and demanded *bai'ya* (oath of fealty) from all as head of the Islamic State, formerly the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Across the world, al-Baghdadi is viewed by Muslims and non-Muslims as a terrorist whose forces are killing innocents. His terror outfit identifies India as one of its targets, incorporating it in an ISIS map of Khorasan, about which the Prophet Muhammad prophesied that jihadists will rise from there and join the forces of Jesus who will be reborn in present-day Israel to proclaim global Islamic rule.

By writing the letter, Salman Nadwi has refused to see the present and clear danger to India; he thinks of himself wiser than 1.25 billion Indians and numerous Islamic scholars across the world who have denounced al-Baghdadi. In the letter sent via WhatsApp and in his later statements in Urdu and Hindi, Nadwi refers to al-Baghdadi as Emir-ul-Momineen (leader of faithful Muslims) and prays "May Allah protect you", urges jihadist organisations in Syria to end their differences, speaks of "good news of victories" in Iraq and advocates

that Muslims “abide by” the Emir-ul-Momineen “if he follows Allah’s sharia”. Nadwi appreciates the “united struggle by Iraq’s different jihadist organisations in making the revolution successful” against Iraq’s elected leader Nouri al-Maliki; he dubs al-Maliki as “the world’s biggest terrorist” for causing Shia-Sunni differences but praises al-Baghdadi whose forces are killing Shias in hundreds, having declared them infidels.

The Indian media are silent, except for the Urdu daily *Aag*, which brought the Nadwi issue on its front page. If a Muslim youth from Azamgarh (which branded as the hotbed of terrorist activity) in Uttar Pradesh had written this letter, he would be languishing in jail by now. In the US, where a person can be arrested for contacting terrorists, and in the United Kingdom, where one can be jailed for downloading jihadist videos and literature from the Internet, Nadwi would have been picked up by intelligence agencies for questioning, if not for outright prosecution. However, being a known scholar at the Lucknow-based seminary Nadwatul Ulama, he enjoys some sort of immunity from government action, especially since India does not have an updated piece of legislation against radicalisation of youth for jihad.

Ashfaq Ahmad, who studied at Nadwatul Ulama and is now a professor of Arabic at Assam University, says that Salman Nadwi has been known for his ideological support for Islamic groups and that such letters may influence younger generations of Indian Muslims, especially hundreds of members of Jamiat-u-Shabab-il-Islam, an organisation of youth established by Nadwi. Meanwhile, a review of Nadwi’s Facebook wall reveals that his followers are lauding him and al-Baghdadi. One Muslim youth commented: “Do not worry, if something happens to you, Allah willing, we will set fire to the ocean too.”

It is also worrying that India’s Shia Muslim leadership, under Iran-backed cleric Maulana Kalb-e-Jawwad, is unable to grasp the threat to Indian Muslims from global jihadism originating from Iraq and Syria. Until now, terror attacks in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India could be traced to Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and other terror groups backed by it, but an era of global jihad has stamped its footprint in India. Recently, some youth from Tamil Nadu went to Syria via Singapore to join the jihadists. Noted investigative journalist Praveen Swami revealed that four Muslims from Mumbai were among Shia pilgrims who went to Iraq where they joined the ISIS. Eighteen Indians have reportedly joined the jihadists in Iraq.

However, the Shia leadership cannot understand these developments or wants to join the conflict. Anjuman-e-Haideri, a

Delhi-based Shia organisation, gave advertisements in Urdu dailies asking people to register to visit Iraq – apparently to volunteer as nurses, doctors and engineers to help Iraqi Shias, but they aim to defend holy shrines. Ali Mirza of Anjuman-e-Haideri set a plan to register one million people. One lakh people registered; 6,000 volunteers applied for Iraq visas. The volunteers do not view this trip as a humanitarian mission; for them it is an end-life journey. Haji Mirza Qasim Raza, a volunteer, said: “There is nothing that I will not do to protect Karbala... including laying down my life.” Zeeshan Haider, a young man, described his trip as “a religious duty”. Jahan Ara, a widow with failing eyesight, said: “There's no better way to spend one's last days.”

Disturbingly, as much as 25 per cent of the volunteers are women. Kalb-e-Jawwad has backed women's participation in battlefields, arguing: “There are misconceptions about Islam being very limiting for women.”

For Shia nurses, doctors and others, the best deed is to help the sick and the elderly in India. A few hundred volunteers, if they want to go on a humanitarian mission, should visit as part of the Red Cross, and not be led by sectarian groups like Anjuman-e-Haideri. War has its own logic that sucks people into its arms. The risk is that Shia Muslims visiting from India could be recruited by Iran-backed terror groups like Hezbollah. Iran recently sent Afghan refugees to fight in Syria.

In a recent article, Pakistani author Ahmed Rashid warned: “The Islamic world will be plunged into a sectarian war of unimaginable dimensions” if the ISIS attacked holy cities of Karbala and Najaf. He noted: “We can expect conflict between Sunni and Shia that could last for years to come. Already, there is an ominous rapid growth of Shia militias in Iraq.”

# India Must Confront Jihadism at Home

**W**ith Iraqi cities falling the Islamic State and the Taliban storming the Karachi airport, the jihadist threat to India is getting real. Throughout history, bands of barbarians have defied established rules of conduct and invaded empires. In the 5th century, Germanic barbarians ransacked Rome several times, causing the fall of the Roman Empire under Augustus Romulus. In the 8th century, jihadists, led by Tariq bin Ziyad and Muhammad bin Qasim, launched unprovoked invasions of Europe and India. On 9/11, barbarians unleashed airborne invasions of American cities. On 26/11, arriving by boats they fought for days in Mumbai. They are launching knife attacks in Chinese towns.

The barbarians use technologies of the day – swords, guns, boats, planes, GPS or Google maps – to wage battle. Around June 10, when jihadists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) ransacked Iraqi cities, they bulldozed a border post set up by Britain and France under the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement. In the jihadists' imagination, maps are vital. Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed speaks of Hyderabad, Junagarh and Kashmir in the same breath. Maps envisioned by the Taliban and Uighur militants include territory from India to Xinjiang as part of Muslim lands, which Osama bin Laden stood to liberate. Jihadism is powered by maps.

Recently, columnists argued that Iran would gain from ISIS advances in Iraq, but history unfolds in unfamiliar ways. If jihadists target Shia holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, they could embroil Iran in a battle. Tehran is already involved in Syria and has nurtured terrorist groups like Hezbollah. With a professional army, Iran appears in good health, but decades of authoritarian clerical rule have caused fault lines not all of which are known. What is known is this: A suicide bomber attacked a meeting in Pishin in 2009, suicide bombings occurred in Zahedan in 2009 and 2010; suicide bombers exploded themselves

outside a mosque in Chabahar in 2010. There are attacks in Sistan-Baluchistan by jihadists who recently seized Iranian soldiers, dragging them into Pakistan.

For several centuries through the World War II, wars were waged by states. Now, non-state actors, state-supported jihadists and self-acting individuals are instigating wars that cannot be fought with nuclear weapons. About 200 Pakistani jihadists are in Syria; some in Pakistani attire were seen recently in Iraq with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). With the Saudi-Pakistan military alliance active in Syria, jihadism could fell Iran and then Pakistan. Jihadists in Afghanistan and Pakistan are as agile as they are in Iraq and Syria. A single idea unites them: jihad. Pakistani jihadists have also entered Myanmar and the Maldives and they are connected with Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) cells in Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

Jihadists have been trying hard to target India. In 2013, al-Qaeda released a video which revealed its failure to recruit Indian Muslims. In the video, Asim Umar, who advises the core al-Qaeda leadership, lamented that the battlefields of Syria and Yemen “are devoid of Indian Muslims”. In a new video this month, Asim urged Kashmiris to join jihad, wondering who replaced Kalashnikovs with stones in their hands. He also warned about a squad of jihadists marching towards Delhi. Jihadists are in surplus all over Pakistan and Afghanistan, and Indian Muslims are getting drawn into their fold. Over the past year, videos from a new terror group, Ansar ut-Tawheed, showed Muslims from Mumbai (Maharashtra), Hyderabad (Telangana), Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka training in Afghanistan.

Also, Pakistan's ISI has been nurturing hubs of Jaish-e-Muhammad, LeT and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Punjab. In the run-up to the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, the following events occurred: in 2010, Abdul Wahid Kashmiri, who inherited the LeT's leadership from Hafiz Saeed, emerged from a decade of hiding at a rally in Kotli; Mushtaq Zargar, who was among the three militants India freed in the wake of the 1999 Kandahar hijacking, emerged in 2013 vowing to fight in India, Chechnya and Palestine; Syed Salahuddin, who once led a coalition of two dozen terror groups, is free in Muzaffarabad, awaiting the ISI's orders; and Masood Azhar, who was freed along with Zargar, re-emerged to address a meeting in Muzaffarabad last January.

In 2010, with mounting US pressure for an operation in North Waziristan, the Pakistan Army moved the jihadists there to new sanctuaries in Kurram Agency. Pakistan had earlier carried out anti-Taliban operations with no effect. The operation in North Waziristan

may have been timed to push the jihadists into Afghanistan, as Pakistan will not touch Mullah Omar's brigades. When Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was in Delhi, a young man in Pakistani Kashmir wrote on his Facebook wall: "For a week, foreign faces have begun to be seen on Kotli-Dhamol road, but today it became known these foreigners (non-Kashmiris) have arrived in Kashmir to wage jihad; hundreds of armed men have openly set up camp outside a mosque."

One may ask if small bands of barbarians can succeed against mighty states. The answer is yes and no. Yes, because jihadists succeed in situations created by local factors; no, because jihadists can be curtailed by resilient states. Nations fall when their internal cohesion weakens. Rome fell because it had become internally fragile from misrule. The jihad by Kashmiris and the Indian Mujahideen is abetted by the alienation of local people from the mainstream. Iraq's cities fell because Baghdad squandered the achievements of the US troop surge and fostered anti-Sunni sectarianism. Conversely, the jihadists' failure to launch attacks inside the US recently can be attributed to the competence of its intelligence and police forces, not US' foreign policies. Therein lies a lesson: build the cohesion of India.

Very soon, India will be confronting bands of barbarians, ideologically motivated by jihad, acting on their own, not necessarily supported by the ISI. India must protect its assets abroad and share intelligence with Israel, Iran, Afghanistan and China, but its focus must be at home: to prevent sleeper cells. The jihadist tide can be confronted by rapidly building a professional police force that is blind to influence, a robust intelligence-gathering mechanism to catch culprits instead of innocents, and a fast-track justice delivery system that engenders public trust. Every Indian must be told that there will be zero tolerance for Muslim jihadists, extremist Hindus, Naxalites, rapists or other tormentors of India.



# Debate Radicalisation Transparently

On December 10, India's Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Haribhai Parathibhai Chaudhary told Parliament: "There are no intelligence inputs to suggest that al-Qaeda and ISIS terror groups are working together to target Indian cities." Intelligence agencies are engaged in a difficult task of tracking terror networks. Let us assume that Chaudhary was presenting a correct assessment of the jihadist threat before the nation. However, 2014 has been an extraordinary year in which the threat of radicalisation from jihadist movements like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qaeda did enter Indian homes.

Based on jihadist sources and media reports, it is possible now to establish routes and patterns of radicalisation in India. One, several youth from Tamil Nadu based in Singapore came in contact with ISIS jihadists. The notable case here is that of Fakkurudeen Usman, who took his wife and three children to Syria. The radicalisation wasn't limited to Singapore, as the jihadists also made their recruitment efforts in Chennai. Two, it has also emerged that in April a Kashmiri youth, Adil Fayaz, was radicalised in Australia and he travelled perhaps directly from there to Syria via Turkey. An additional point to remember is that several educated Kashmiri youth have gone missing in the past two years.

Three, after al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri's announcement of the establishment of the Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), it was reported in September that 23 youth from Thoubal district of Manipur had left their homes in two batches to join the AQIS. Their joining al-Qaeda should not be surprising since north-eastern region of the country has witnessed anti-Muslim violence in Assam and nearby Myanmar. In the past, non-Muslim terrorists from the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) travelled through China to Afghanistan not for jihad, but to train at Osama bin Laden's camps.

Four, from India's viewpoint, the biggest story was that of four Muslims from Mumbai who flew to Iraq as Shia pilgrims and joined the ISIS. One of them, Arif aka Areeb Majeed, who was injured, reached Turkey for treatment with the help of Turkish businessmen. He was brought to India.

Five, Arif Majeed revealed that he saw 13 Indian youth already present at a training camp in Syria. His statement indicates that these Indians had gone to work in the Middle East, probably in the United Arab Emirates, from where they joined the ISIS. Six, in a worrying development, it was revealed that a popular jihadist account on Twitter was operated by an Indian youth called Mehdi, who was working for a Bangalore-based firm. Seven, Munawad Salman, a software engineer and former employee of Google in Hyderabad, was arrested for trying to join the ISIS. Also, Telangana state police stopped 15 engineering students, including a girl, from Kolkata where they had gone for an onward journey to Iraq in September. Another Hyderabad youth was detained in Mumbai. Eight, several youth in Kashmir, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand were also seen wearing ISIS T-shirts and waving flags in favour of the ISIS.

Nine, the footprints of the Pakistan-sponsored jihadist organisation Indian Mujahideen were seen in several bomb blasts in recent years in different parts of India, though its leadership is in disarray because of the arrests of some of its key leaders. However, many innocent youth are also languishing in jails because they were arrested by police just to prove their own effectiveness. Ten, as revealed in the videos of Ansarut Tawheed Fi Bilad Al-Hind from mid-2013 onwards, at least nine Indian Muslims were being trained in Pakistan by a Saudi jihadist. A jihadist organisation with a similar name, Ansarut Tawheed Wal Jihad Fi Kashmir, emerged after this year's floods in Kashmir, offering to host al-Qaeda fighters though it noted that it faced difficulties.

From all these aforementioned developments, one can derive some lessons. Radicalisation is taking place rapidly both in India and among expatriate Indian workers based in the Middle East and elsewhere. This radicalisation is of two types: One, Muslims are self-taught in jihad and connected to jihadist groups through social media; two, they are recruited by jihadist groups. Indians have gone mainly to four countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. In the past, Indian jihadists went to Grozny, Serbia and Glasgow. Also, some commentators have dismissed the emergence of ISIS T-shirts in Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and Kashmir as innocent transgressions by street urchins, but they are in fact an important barometer of radicalisation under way in Indian society, from Mumbai to Hyderabad, from Chennai to Manipur.

At a conference in Delhi on November 22, this writer asked National Security Adviser Ajit Doval to estimate the number of Indian youth who got radicalised and had migrated for jihad. Doval skipped the written question but noted that five or six youth were inclined to join jihadist groups but their parents had contacted security agencies which helped them. However, from jihadist sources and the Indian media, it is possible to estimate the number of radicalised youth. Various media reports have put the number of such youth in scores, up to 300. It appears definitive that nearly 50 Indian jihadists are based in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. As long as jihadism in Pakistan survives, India will continue to face threats. Arif Jamal, a New York-based author, recently warned that global jihadism has expanded to three poles: Nigeria, Iraq-Syria and Pakistan-Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, Indian government leaders hold an erroneous belief that jihadism in India can be curbed by refraining from talking publicly about it. India is a free society, deriving its strengths from openness and law. This strength can work only in a public way, when the media and citizens debate the causes and extent of radicalisation. It is also essential that while pushing Pakistan for justice in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks case, India must deliver time-bound trial of terror cases on its soil, including the 2007 Samjhauta Express bombings. A dysfunctional India cannot be a great republic. Authoritarian systems like China and Saudi Arabia can crush the jihadists, but being a free society means that India has an additional task: to catch the jihadists as well as to protect their rights guaranteed under the Constitution, the source of liberty for Indians.

# Charlie Hebdo Attackers Find Indian Supporters

The January 7 terror attack on *Charlie Hebdo* has been described by some Indian politicians as a “backlash” against the French satirical weekly’s publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad a few years ago. However, it appears that the ideas that drove the jihadists to kill the cartoonists and editors of *Charlie Hebdo* are very much alive in towns and cities across India. A review of Facebook comments made by Muslim youth on the Paris shooting reveals that the geography of this radicalisation in India is indeed wide, fertile and raw.

Soon after the attack, Indian Muslim Ekta, Facebook page which describes itself as “a peaceful page for Muslims and Non-Muslims”, posted a news report on the killing of 12 people in Paris. Within five days, it had 1,245 “Likes”, mostly by Indian Muslim youth who appear to be in their teens and twenties, though there were others older as well. A study of nearly 400 comments, mostly in Roman Urdu, posted on this page raises a serious question on what Islamic scholars in India are teaching the next generation of Muslims. It also reveals a wide geography of radicalisation across India.

Naseem Ahmad is a teenager whose moustache is just beginning to grow as seen from his profile photograph. He wrote: “All praise be to Allah; very pious deed was done; glory be to Allah; heart was gladdened.” Sohaa Ali, a hijab-wearing woman who lives in Jaipur, commented: “Very good news.” Rajib Ali, a youth in his thirties and based in the Assamese town of Tinsukia, wished the Paris attackers safety: “May Allah protect those who killed.”

Faiz Anwar, who lives in Mumbai and claims his affiliation to the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), narrated a story in which a man came to ask Abdullah, the son of the second Islamic caliph Umar ibn Khattab, for a fatwa (Islamic decree) vis-a-vis a person who had committed blasphemy, to which Abdullah reacted

in anger: “You have come to ask for a fatwa, why didn't you first kill him?”

Masoom Ahmad, who is from Pakur in Jharkhand, praised the killers of the French cartoonists, saying: “We are proud of those who carried out this act; well done!” Sameer Ansari, a youth based in the northern town of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, wrote: “Look the people of the world, anyone who speaks about Islam will meet the same end.” Owaish Sadik, a youth based in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh, commented: “12 people/deaths were very less; 1200 should have been killed.” M. Umar Khan, who looks younger than a teenager, expressed this theological view: “They had to be punished because God doesn't like blasphemy of his prophet.” Sagir Shah, studying for an engineering degree in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, had this to say: “I am proud of Muslim warriors.” Jafar Khan, a Mumbai-based youth, observed: “If an editor or cartoonist has drawn such a cartoon, then it is a small punishment.”

Ahal Qadri Rabbani from Mungaoli, Madhya Pradesh, wrote: “Kill more of these dogs.” Aadil Pathan, a youth from Ajmer in Rajasthan state, said: “No doubt, this had to happen. Today, I am so happy.... I am proud to be on ISIS. Really, it is a great organisation.” Mohd Mustafa, a Shimla-based youth whose profile sports a picture of Osama bin Laden, approved of the Paris attack as “very good”.

Imran Khan, from Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh, warned: “Anyone who thinks wrong about Muslims will be killed in this way. Islam was alive, Islam is alive and Islam will be alive.” Taslima Noor, a girl from Navi Mumbai who works in the film industry and also identifies herself with the AIMIM, said: “Very good; blow up the entire office [of *Charlie Hebdo*].”

Of nearly 400 comments, there were just a few on the page of Indian Muslim Ekta saying that Islam does not teach murder. The overwhelming responses from across India were in favour of the attackers. These comments are not geographically isolated. Similar comments celebrating the killings were made on this Facebook page by Muslim youth living in Kolkata, Patna, Chhapra, Nawada, Tanda, Lucknow, Dehradun, Aligarh, New Delhi, Srinagar, Jalandhar, Bhilwara, Indore, Jabalpur, Kheda, Ratnagiri, Jawahar, Nagina, Amravati, Pune, Bangalore and other places. Among them are engineers, doctors, graduates, school students, both male and female.

Indian Muslims who posted these comments online are not terrorists, but some observations can still be made about them. They are present across India and there is no difference between their viewpoints and those of the jihadists of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and the

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) when it comes to blasphemy under sharia. It is unlikely that all or even a majority of them will become terrorists, but it certainly suggests that there is a fertile field of jihadist ideas being cultivated by Islamic scholars in India, notions which young Muslims are fed regularly. This is a result of decades of Islamic teachings offered by madrassas. At any point in time and across countries, these ideas can be easily used to destabilise society.

When a head of state or dignitary rises to deliver even a short speech before TV cameras, a draft is made beforehand on paper and thought through. But in the Islamic world, it is standard practice for a cleric – who is usually not even a college graduate and lives in isolation from the world of scientific knowledge and the media – to deliver in mosques, madrassas and religious congregations called *jalsas* hours of unwritten speeches on Islam's history and politics. Muslim societies are subjected to such influence on an industrial scale every week in almost every part of the world, and its consequences emerge in our midst from time to time.

It can be observed in social behaviour across the country, notably when Muslim women stop the practice of singing on weddings in villages; when youth sport ISIS T-shirts and wave its flag in different towns; when a jeans-clad engineering graduate turns up at a restaurant in Delhi's Connaught Place for a meal with his wife clad in a burqa; when some Muslims join the Indian Mujahideen and plant bombs; when a Muslim decides to chop off the hand of a lecturer in Kerala for setting a question paper deemed disrespectful to the Prophet Muhammad; when a passenger writes messages in favour of the ISIS in an airport terminal toilet in Mumbai; when a non-Muslim is forced to convert to Islam in order to consummate his or her love; when writers are forced to go into hiding; or when cartoonists are killed in cold blood. All these instances point to an all-India phenomenon.

There is no shortcut to offset the gradual process towards radicalisation for jihad. However, government officials can make an effort to counter it by initiating madrasa reform, regulating mosques and putting in place a zero-tolerance policing system. All madrassas and mosques in India must be registered and regulated: their sources of funding must be audited by local government officials every year. However, far-reaching changes are required to develop a reformed syllabus too which, while allowing the teachings of the Quran, Hadiths and Islamic Studies, must include the teaching of English and material sciences as well as the liberal arts right from junior levels.

# India Needs a Counter-Radicalisation Law

**I**n a video on September 3, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of its branch in the Indian subcontinent. Some analysts dismissed it as a desperate bid by al-Qaeda to salvage its reputation amid competition from the Islamic State led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In India, discussions on this global security issue are highly politicised, with commentators portraying youth headed to Kolkata for an onward journey to join jihadists abroad as if they were going to play football in the city.

Al-Qaeda may not have launched a spectacular 9/11-style attack since, but its affiliates are on a killing spree in many countries. The threat from al-Qaeda is serious. For several years, it has been developing a response to anti-Muslim conflicts in Assam and Myanmar. In September 2012, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, head of al-Qaeda's preaching and media department for Pakistan, warned that the riots in Assam "provide impetus for us to hasten our advance towards Delhi". Al-Qaeda videos appealed to Indian Muslims to migrate to Syria and urged Kashmiris to abandon stones in favour of Kalashnikovs.

Several videos were issued by Maulana Asim Umar, now head of al-Qaeda's new branch Al-Qaeda Jihad Organisation in South Asia. Asim Umar and Ustad Farooq are Pakistanis who have guided al-Qaeda's Arab leadership to evolve a theoretical framework for South Asia. Indian Muslims are migrating to Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. In the Muslim imagination, emigration for setting up an Islamic state has religious significance, since the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to found the first Islamic state in Medina. Jihadist videos often state *hijrah* (migration) as a religious duty, a reason youth from India, the United States and Europe are migrating.

Both the Islamic State and al-Qaeda have similar ideology and have declared India a key target. Al-Qaeda's South Asia strategy is succeeding. Videos from mid-2013 show nearly a dozen Muslims from

Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh training in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. Recently, jihadist accounts on Twitter released images of two Indians killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. Roughly, 100 Indians are reportedly fighting in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

Al-Zawahiri's video, released just days before the 9/11 anniversary, is timed with the Pakistani military's thinking aimed at controlling Afghanistan through jihadists by the end of 2014 as the United States withdraws its troops from that country. Indians must grasp this security threat urgently: al-Qaeda is essentially a branch of the Pakistani military. Facts are obvious. Although it has been led by Arab terrorists, al-Qaeda is a Pakistani organisation; it was established in Pakistan and nurtured there. It is from Pakistan that it spread to the Middle East. Its leadership is housed there. It is an established fact that Osama bin Laden was comprehensively protected by the Pakistani military and its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Also, Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar is al-Qaeda's topmost leader. Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri offered *bai'yah* (oath of fealty) to Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen, or leader of the faithful Muslims. He is considered Emir-ul-Momineen by all al-Qaeda affiliates and Taliban factions. A few years ago, when the US threatened to launch drone attacks in Balochistan, the ISI got worried about Omar's safety and moved him to Karachi from Quetta. Much like bin Laden, Mullah Omar is fully protected by the ISI. Although al-Qaeda's affiliates work in separate operational domains, in the Indian subcontinent, al-Qaeda is effectively the ISI's branch.

Al-Zawahiri stated that the new anti-India branch would work to erase the borders demarcated by the British so that a larger Islamic state could be created. For close observers of Pakistan, this objective of al-Qaeda is essentially shared by the ISI, which imagines itself as the ideological guardian of the Islamic state of Pakistan, characterised by Pakistani thinkers as "Medina-e-Sani" or second Medina, the first being the Islamic state set up by the Prophet Muhammad.

By establishing an anti-India organisation, al-Qaeda is advancing the ISI's objectives across South Asia. "This is something what Pakistan always wanted to happen in the emerging India," says Pakistani journalist Asif Magsi, who is on a media fellowship in Washington. "It's now overt to the world that the ISI and the Pakistan Army have close ties with al-Qaeda." In the video, al-Zawahiri appears in good health; the intelligence agencies must search for him in Rawalpindi, not in the mountains. India must also act.



One, Indian laws are far too inadequate to deal with jihadists. Authoritarian states like China and Saudi Arabia can fight terrorists with crude force. However, India is an open society and a thriving democracy; its citizens are determined to bring up their children in an environment of liberties. India must enact a counter-radicalisation law, which will help its citizens defend their individual freedoms and empower security agencies.

Two, al-Zawahiri's announcement has more to it than meets the eye. Two days after his video came out, it emerged that 23 Muslims from Manipur had gone to join al-Qaeda's anti-India branch. Indian Muslims are being radicalised both by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. In the US, sting operations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have been successful. India must introduce FBI-style sting operations to curb radicalisation.

Three, sting operations cannot succeed without strengthening laws. Security agencies find it hard to collect evidence about terrorists, who are freed by courts on technical and procedural grounds. Sting operations can help in collecting evidence. In the US, individuals trying to contact terrorists can be prosecuted; in the United Kingdom, anyone other than counterterrorism researchers can be jailed for downloading jihadist videos. Indian laws must also allow for prosecution of terror acts committed by Indian citizens on foreign soil.

Four, fake encounters are just not acceptable. Fake encounters morally corrode intelligence and police agencies from within; they damage our society's moral fibre to fight terrorism. They can destroy us as a nation with a moral purpose. They also prevent good-intentioned Muslims from reporting youth headed for jihad abroad. Indians must laud the parents in Hyderabad for alerting the police to help stop their sons from heading to Iraq. Such parents are the first line of defence against jihadism in our societies.

# The Rise of Ideological Jihadists in India

**A**lmost all terror attacks in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India could until now be attributed to the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI, as well as to major Pakistan-based terror organisations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad. But that is no longer the case. India is now witnessing the rise of a new generation of jihadists, who identify themselves with groups based in the Middle East. They are motivated by the ideology of jihad – both through social media networks as well as by local recruiters – and are not sponsored by Pakistan. According to intelligence estimates that appeared in the media in July, up to 80 Indian Muslim youth are believed to be fighting alongside jihadists in Iraq and Syria. The argument that Indian Muslims are not part of Osama bin Laden's global jihad now stands invalidated by the turn of events.

In the summer of 2013, a new anti-India group came to the fore: Ansar ut-Tawheed Fi Bilad Al-Hind (Supporters of the Islamic Monotheism in India). It released a number of videos in which nearly a dozen youth from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh were shown training somewhere in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. On July 18 this year, the 20th of the fasting month of Ramadan, a jihadi account on Twitter released a photograph of Anwer Bhatkal, who was killed while fighting in Afghanistan; Anwer is a relative of Indian Mujahideen co-founder Riyaz Bhatkal.

These Muslim men are recruited both in India and abroad. As reported by journalist Praveen Swami, four Muslim youth from the suburbs of Mumbai – Arif Majeed, Fahad Sheikh, Shaheen Tanki and Aman Tandel – flew on May 23 for Baghdad as part of a group of 22 Shia pilgrims and joined the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the terror group headed by jihadist commander Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. A few youth from Tamil Nadu who were based in Singapore were

recruited by jihadists and are now fighting in Syria. Notable among them is Fakkurudeen, who took his wife and three children to the jihadist battlefield.

In addition to the ideological jihadists who may or may not be recruited by Pakistan-based groups, the arrest in April – along with the Chennai train blasts in May – of Sri Lankan national Shakir aka Zakir Hussein by the Chennai Police revealed transnational terror links involving Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Pakistan and Malaysia to target Israeli and United States consulates in Bangalore and Chennai, hatched by the ISI and involving a Pakistani diplomat in Colombo.

On June 29, in an audio statement issued by al-Baghdadi, he declared himself the caliph, or the head of the Islamic State, and demanded *bai'ya* (an oath of fealty) from all Muslims. Among the jihadists, the position of caliph, known formally as Emir-ul-Momineen (leader of the faithful Muslims), was until now held only by Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Taliban leader from Afghanistan. Al-Baghdadi's ISIS has released a global map where it aims to enforce the Islamic sharia rule. The map includes the land of Khorasan, which covers Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

### **The Jihadist Threat to India is Real**

Al-Baghdadi is considered a terrorist by all good-intentioned people in the West and the East, including by a large number of Islamic clerics across the world – except by Indian cleric Maulana Salman al-Husaini Nadwi. In early July, Nadwi, an Islamic scholar at the Nadwatul Ulama seminary of Lucknow, wrote an open letter greeting him on his assuming the role of caliph. In the letter sent via messaging service WhatsApp and in later statements in Hindi and Urdu, Nadwi referred to al-Baghdadi as Emir-ul-Momineen and prayed "May Allah protect you", spoke of "good news of victories" in Iraq, urged jihadist organisations in Syria to sink their differences and forge unity, and advocated that Muslims "abide by" the Emir-ul-Momineen "if he follows Allah's sharia".

Nadwi's message is certain to motivate hundreds of Indian Muslim youth on the path of global jihad, especially because the cleric heads an organisation of Muslim youth called Jamiat-u-Shabab-il-Islam, which must now be placed on the watch of Indian intelligence agencies. An especially worrisome fact is that Nadwi wrote another letter to Saudi Arabia requesting the Saudis to train five lakh Sunni Muslim youth

from India to fight against Shia militias in Iraq, according to media reports emerging in July.

Anjuman-e-Haideri, a Delhi-based organisation of Shia Muslims, placed advertisements in Urdu newspapers calling on volunteers to defend holy shrines in Iraq. Ali Mirza of Anjuman-e-Haideri said his group would register one million volunteers. One lakh Shias registered; of them, 6,000 volunteers applied for Iraqi visas.

The volunteers say their mission is humanitarian. Zeeshan Haider, a youth, described his trip as "a religious duty". Haji Mirza Qasim Raza, a volunteer, said: "There is nothing that I will not do to protect Karbala... including laying down my life." Jahan Ara, a widow with failing eyesight, said: "There's no better way to spend one's last days."

Twenty-five per cent of the volunteers are women. Iran-backed Shia cleric Kalb-e-Jawwad supported women's participation in battlefields, arguing: "There are misconceptions about Islam being very limiting for women." The risk is that Indian Shias visiting Iraq could be recruited by Iran-backed Shia militias. For Shia nurses, doctors and others, the best deed is to help the sick in India; or, they should go as part of the Red Cross, not led by a sectarian group like Anjuman-e-Haideri.

Social media reports and images indicate that some public demonstrations in favour of the al-Baghdadi-led ISIS took place in the states of Tamil Nadu and Jammu & Kashmir. According to one report, nearly two dozen Muslim youth posed for a picture wearing ISIS T-shirts in front of the "Periya Pallivasal" (big mosque) in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu, from where some youth have already gone to fight in Syria. Reports from Jammu & Kashmir reveal that masked Kashmiri youth held at least two public demonstrations carrying ISIS flags in Srinagar: the first was at the Jamia Masjid on July 11 and the second was on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr, July 29. There were reports in the Indian media that Muslim youth from Kerala could be headed to join groups like the ISIS.

In recent years, al-Qaeda has carried out a considerable media campaign to recruit youth from India. In June 2013, al-Qaeda released a video titled "Why is there no storm in your river?" in which the militant cleric Maulana Asim Umar expressed exasperation that while Muslim youth from all over the world were fighting in Syria and elsewhere, Indian Muslims were not.

Last June, al-Qaeda released another video devoted to the Kashmir issue, in which Asim Umar exhorted: "Who took away Kalashnikovs from the hands of my Kashmiri Muslims and handed them stones and pieces of soil?"

### **Not All Terrorists are Jihadists or Islamists**

India now needs to worry about the threat from ideological jihadists. There are clear indications that the ISIS is attracting jihadists from Pakistan and India. Their guiding philosophy is rooted in Ghazwa-e-Hind (the Battle of India), a statement in which the Prophet Muhammad prophesied that two groups from the ummah will be saved from the fire of hell – one group will rise from India and march on to join the forces of the second group led by Jesus who will be reborn in present-day Israel to establish global Islamic rule.

The Ghazwa-e-Hind prophecy is widely quoted in the literature and videos of the Taliban and al-Qaeda's Pakistani commanders as well as by mainstream Pakistani jihadist ideologues such as Zaid Hamid, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and Jaish-e-Muhammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar. Now, India is seeing the emergence of this class of jihadists who ideologically connect with those in Iraq and Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia.

### **Five Key Arguments on the Roots of Jihadism**

After 9/11, Western commentators and liberal Muslim writers have sought to dismiss the reality of jihadist terrorism by arguing that the terrorists were inspired by Egyptian jihadist theorist Syed Qutb and Jamaat-e-Islami founder Syed Abul A'la Maududi. Those among the liberal commentators who sought to criticise Islamists and jihadists were rejected, ridiculed and accused by those who are soft on the Islamists of spreading Islamophobia.

However, a review of videos and publications released by jihadist organisations reveals that these groups do not mention any of the above-mentioned scholars. Invariably, jihadist literature and videos justify jihad on the basis of teachings from the Quran, the Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) and precedents established by the four Righteous Caliphs who succeeded the Prophet. Let us take up some arguments about jihad being debated.

#### **Argument 1: Islam promotes pluralism and coexistence**

Whenever a terror attack takes place, notably on Sufi shrines in Pakistan or on Shia Muslims elsewhere, critics of Islamism are told to shut up by supporters of everyday Islamism who argue that Islam promotes pluralism and coexistence. They cite the Quranic verse “To you your religion, and to me mine” (Verse 109:6). However, jihadists

reject this interpretation. *Nawa-i-Afghan Jihad* (Voice of the Afghan Jihad), an Urdu-language magazine published from somewhere in Pakistan, carried an article titled “The Success of ‘Democratic Islamists’ in the Elections of Tunisia and Egypt”, written by Hafiz Ehsanul Haq. It argued that the concerned verse was revealed not to promote pluralism but to ensure that the Islamic way of life did not mix with the lifestyles of non-Muslims of Mecca.

Haq explained how the Prophet Muhammad rejected an offer from non-Muslims of Mecca to live together and share power: “Addressing all faithful Muslims, the Quran has said with full clarity that Allah has chosen the complete religion – Islam – for them. The Prophet Muhammad was sent with the religion, and spent his days and nights for the implementation of that religion only. He rejected an offer from *kuffar* [infidels/polytheists] of Mecca to rule [in collaboration] because it is impossible to run a polytheist system along with Islam based on compromise.”

### **Argument 2: Suicide attacks are not permitted**

In Pakistan, the Taliban have bombed a series of mosques, shrines and holy places belonging to Ahmadi Muslims, Shias and Sufi mystics. In 2014, their ideological cousins in Iraq and Syria have been demolishing historical mosques, tombs of prophets and shrines revered both by Shias and Sunnis alike. However, a key argument by those who fail to condemn the jihadists is that bombing mosques is un-Islamic and suicide attacks are not permitted by Islam. This argument has become a first-line defence in our societies for jihadists. However, jihadists themselves are overturning this argument by citing incidents from the early Islamic era and based on authentic Islamic literature.

In 2013, the jihadist website Minbar Al-Tawhid Wal-Jihad published a fatwa, written by Mauritian radical cleric Sheikh Abu Mundhir al-Shinqiti, about the permissibility of bombing synagogues and churches. He summarised Islamic jurists’ opinion that attacking houses of worship is illegitimate, based on the Quran: “Had Allah not defended some men by the might of others, the monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which His praise is daily celebrated would have been utterly destroyed” (Verse 22:40).

However, al-Shinqiti went on to reject this argument, citing medieval scholar Ibn al-Qaym al-Jawziyya’s opinion that the verse referred to only the pre-Islamic era and that since Judaism and Christianity had lost their validity with the birth of Islam, their houses of worship also had lost their protected status. Al-Shinqiti explained

that only two types of worship places were protected by Islam: those belonging to (non-Muslim) monotheists living as *dhimmis* (second-class subjects) in a Muslim state, and secluded monasteries. In other words, depending on circumstances, churches and synagogues of Christians and Jews can be attacked. It can be inferred from this interpretation that if polytheist Hindus were living in a Muslim state as *dhimmis*, their temples would not be protected because such protection is available only to monotheist non-Muslims.

In December 2013, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, or Movement of the Pakistani Taliban) released a posthumous video of its commander Qari Hussain Ahmed Mehsud. In the video, Mehsud is seen replying to popular criticism of the Taliban by Pakistani writers over the bombing of mosques thus: “The Prophet Muhammad declared jihad in Madina, demolished mosques of the *munafiqeen* [hypocrites].” The issue of mosques built by the *munafiqeen* in Medina has been discussed in verses 107-110 of the Quran’s chapter Al-Tawbah.

Citing incidents from the era of the Prophet Muhammad, jihadists also reject the argument that suicide bombings are not permitted. Jihadists agree with Islamic scholars that suicide for personal reasons is not permitted in Islam. However, they argue that suicide bombings are permitted for establishing sharia rule. Writing in a Taliban magazine in 2013, Islamist writer Muhammad Qasim cited two Quranic verses to rationalise “martyrdom” attacks: “And this life of the world is only amusement and play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed, i.e. the eternal life that will never end....” (Verse 29:64); and “Think not of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord” (Verse 3:169).

### **Argument 3: Islam is a peaceful religion**

Soon after the Prophet Muhammad died, a war of succession and bloodshed began. In a message to his followers at a place called Ghadeer – the veracity of which is accepted by many scholars, but Sunnis interpret it differently – the Prophet nominated his cousin and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abi Talib, as his successor. However soon after the Prophet’s death, his companions argued that the successor (caliph) be chosen through consultation. Abu Bakr became the first caliph, followed by Umar ibn al-Khattab and Usman ibn Affan. When the time came to choose the fourth caliph, there was disagreement and the caliphate went to Ali. This dispute led to the birth of two sects of Islam: Sunnis who believe in that succession under which Ali

is the fourth caliph and Shias who believe that Ali is the first caliph, succeeded by an entirely different set of imams (leaders). This led to a bloody struggle in Islam.

Except for Abu Bakr, all the caliphs and 12 Shia imams were murdered or poisoned in the wake of the battle of Karbala.

Most of the jihadist bloodshed today can be attributed to this conflict: Sunni versus Shia. The conflict is forged by Iranian and Saudi roles in Muslim countries, especially in the wake of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Tehran. Iran, predominantly Shia, has nurtured a number of terrorist groups including Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia, primarily Sunni, has backed Sunni jihadist groups across the world to counter the Iranian influence. United States President Barack Obama's decision to alter the course of American foreign policy in the Middle East made the Saudis so insecure that Riyadh backed jihadist groups like the ISIS in Syria and Iraq. The current wave of bloodshed in Syria and Iraq can be attributed to Tehran and Riyadh, along with the US.

In the early Islamic era, the Prophet Muhammad himself took part in 27 wars. It is often argued that the Prophet upheld compassion and justice for all; indeed there are incidents from his life to prove that. However, a major argument forwarded by apologists of Islamism is that the Prophet pardoned everyone after the Victory of Mecca. This is historically incorrect, or only partially true. In 2012, al-Qaeda released an audio lecture of Ustad Ahmad Farooq, who heads al-Qaeda's preaching and media department for Pakistan. In the lecture, Farooq lauded Malik Mumtaz Qadri, an elite security commando who was deployed to protect Punjab's liberal governor Salman Taseer but instead assassinated him for advocating reforms in Pakistan's blasphemy laws.

Farooq criticised enemy forces for advocating that the Taliban and other jihadist forces should show patience and register their protests peacefully. "This is not the path that the Prophet himself taught us," Ustad Farooq noted, adding: "On the day of Victory of Mecca, when all people were granted amnesty, the Prophet was informed that there were about 10 people, including women, who had committed blasphemy against him. He ordered that even if they are found hanging on the curtains of the Kaaba (the Holy Mosque of Mecca), they deserve no respect, and their blood should be spilled; and indeed it was spilled." This blasphemy law has become a nightmare for Christians, Ahmadi Muslims and others in Pakistan and other Islamic countries.



#### Argument 4: Jihad means personal striving

In purely etymological terms, jihad means striving. Islamic scholars have argued that jihad means striving to become a better Muslim. But in the popular Muslim imagination it carries only one meaning: military fighting to establish Islamic rule. Almost every video and e-book released by jihadist groups quotes directly from the Quran to argue that jihad means to procure arms, to train and be prepared, to fight and establish the rule of Allah on earth. A verse frequently cited in jihadist videos is: “Fight them until no corruption (*kufi*) exists and all religion (worship) is for Allah” (Verse 8:39). This verse was cited in a 2013 video from the Manba-ul-Jihad Studio of the Haqqani Network of the Afghan Taliban led by Mullah Mohammad Omar.

Terrorists cite many similar verses in their own cause. In 2013, a TTP video cited the verse “Fight against them. Allah will torment them at your hands and will humiliate them, and will help you against them, and will heal the breasts of the Muslims” (Verse 9:14). Last year, al-Qaeda al-Jihad fi Bilad-e- Khurasan (Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan) released a video lecture of the militant cleric Maulana Asim Umar in which he cited Quranic verses arguing that Islam should prevail over all other ways of life: “And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the *alameen*” (mankind, jinns, and all that exist) (Verse 2:251). Umar explained its meaning thus: “If jihad is not performed, everything on earth would be filled with corruption.”

Those who argue that Islam teaches moderation cite the following Quranic verse: “There is no compulsion in (acceptance of) religion” (Verse 2:256). However, jihadists argue that this verse is applicable to non-Muslims who must live under sharia rule. A year ago, the TTP released a video of a Pakistan-based Myanmarese militant scholar Mufti Abuzar Azaam, who stated that according to this verse, no Christian, Jew, or non-Muslim can be forced to accept Islam but went on to argue that when Muslims go to war, they first do *dawah* (invite non-Muslims to the fold of Islam). Arguing that only Islam offers the principle of “live and let live”, he however insisted that there was indeed compulsion for Muslims. He quoted the Prophet Muhammad as saying: “Beat up your children when they are 10 years old to offer their prayers if they do not do so.” Azaam’s interpretation means that a) there is indeed compulsion in religion insofar as Muslims are concerned; b) non-Muslims cannot be forced to convert to Islam, but must live as *dhimmi*s (second-class subjects) under the Islamic rule, the only

permissible system of governance on the earth of Allah, and their security will be guaranteed in lieu of *jizya* (tax on non-Muslim subjects).

Asim Umar's argument in an al-Qaeda video in June 2013 goes that non-Muslims cannot be forced to accept Islam but Islam must prevail over all other systems of government, which means that Islam does not imagine a situation in which it can coexist with non-Muslims in power. Umar cited the Quran: "And if there comes any power in the way [of establishing an Islamic sharia system] then it was ordered [by the Quran]: 'whoever comes in the way of this system, do *qital* [fight to kill] against them until their power is broken, their rule gets ended, and then establish the lifestyle world over in accordance with this Quran' (Verse 2:190)."

An Internet forum on Facebook associated with the TTP, in a post dated March 5, rejected the argument that there is "no terrorism in Islam". It quoted a Quranic verse: "If anyone killed an innocent it would be as if he had killed the whole of mankind. And one who saved a life would be as if he had saved the lives of whole mankind" (Verse 5:32). In the jihadists' perspective, jihad simply is fighting to establish the peace of Islam to save mankind from polytheism and other such corruptions.

#### **Argument 5: Islam protects minorities; Quran advocates peace**

If one criticises Islam, pro-Islamists in our neighbourhoods retort that Islam protects minorities. This is indeed correct, but a deeper examination reveals that in order to enjoy the protection of Islam, non-Muslim minorities must live under Islamic rule and pay *jizya*. In other words, non-Muslims cannot be rulers. This is the precise jihadist argument based on which a number of Muslim countries do not allow their non-Muslim citizens to become heads of state. Under the constitution of Pakistan, a non-Muslim Pakistani citizen cannot be the head of state. Under a constitutional amendment in 2008, the Maldives barred non-Muslims from becoming citizens. For several decades, Egypt has constitutionally barred its non-Muslim citizens from occupying top positions in government. Several Islamic countries do not permit non-Muslim citizens to become heads of state. This is also exactly the case with blasphemy laws prevailing in several Islamic countries, from Sudan to Pakistan, with Islamists arguing that blasphemy of the Prophet Muhammad cannot be even pardoned by him.

Islamic clerics and average Muslims argue that the Quran advocates peace. Indeed, it does. There are hundreds of verses in the Quran that advocate love, peace and brotherhood. Islam is a peaceful religion, and the majority of Muslims are peaceful. However, the majority does not

exist meaningfully: it takes just one cleric to stand up, deliver a lecture and shut up an entire village. The majority ignores him, thereby allowing him to rule over them, and the few who follow him truly could become jihadists.

While there are hundreds of verses in favour of peace and brotherhood, there are also numerous Islamic justifications for armed fighting and capture of women in times of war, as Boko Haram demonstrated in Nigeria. So, there are others who argue the need for admitting this paradox: Islam is and is not peaceful – both at the same, as is illustrated in numerous verses.

### **The Case for Islamic Reform**

In Islam, the concept of god is dual: as rahman and raheem (gracious and merciful), and as jabbar and qahhar (mighty and punishing). The need of the hour is for Indian Islamic scholars to sit down and think through the relevance of the Quranic verses for the modern age, and assess what kind of teachings Muslim youth, who are attracted to jihadist forces like the ISIS, al-Qaeda and the Taliban, are imbibing from some verses. For meaningful Islamic reformation to begin, Islamic scholars and college-going Muslim youth must admit that there are two types of verses: those advocating peace, love and pluralism and those that contradict these teachings.

Fortunately, India has a strong legacy of Islamic reform. After the fall of Delhi in 1857, there were two responses from within the Muslim community to revive the fortunes of Indian Muslims: one group of reformers was led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who stressed the need for learning European sciences and for promoting a scientific temperament among Muslims; he wrote an interpretation of the Quran and established a college for modern education, now known as the Aligarh Muslim University. The second response was led by Maulana Qasim Nanautavi, who believed in Islamic revivalism as the panacea for the problems of Muslims and established Darul Uloom Deoband, the seminary producing obscurantism and anti-women fatwas. In the post-Independence era, Maharashtra-based reformer Hamid Dalwai articulated a better model for reform as a liberty project for Indian Muslims by incorporating Enlightenment ideas and arguing for the need to think beyond the frameworks of secularism and minorityism.

A host of Islamic scholars and activists such as Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, the late Asghar Ali Engineer, Daud Sharifa, Shaista Amber, Zeenat Shaukat Ali, Syeda Saiyidain Hameed, Uzma Naheed and others have been working for reform: their work is essentially

within the framework of Islam. However, Muslims must also realise that change comes from external forces: interaction with foreign ideas generated by travel, globalisation, wars and technologies. The current waves of conflict in the Middle East and the Afghanistan-Pakistan region should also remind Indian Muslims that Islamic reform is urgent, and such a task must be accomplished by Islamic scholars from India. This is because India is the only country where Muslims have consistently experienced democratic values for more than half a century. There is absolutely no Muslim nation that can compare with this extraordinary experience of Indian Muslims on almost all conceivable parameters: political and religious freedom, educational and economic opportunities, freedom of thought and expression, individual liberty or right to form political association. The Constitution of India contains hugely relevant ideas from the Enlightenment to address Muslim issues.

However, given this context, it is a tragedy that nearly one hundred Muslims from India are fighting alongside jihadists in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. Indian Muslims must admit that there is a problem of jihadism in our midst.

# Combating Radicalisation in Free Societies

**O**n March 19, at a counterterrorism conference in Jaipur, India's Home Minister Rajnath Singh said: "Indian Muslims are patriots and are not swayed by fundamentalist ideologies. Extremism is alien to their nature." Rajnath Singh's statement was in consonance with the standpoint articulated earlier by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who told journalist Fareed Zakaria last September: "Indian Muslims will live for India and die for India. Al-Qaeda is delusional to think Indian Muslims will dance to its tunes." Speaking about the threat of the Islamic State, formerly the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the home minister remarked: "According to our intelligence agencies, just a handful of Indian youth have joined the ISIS and some have returned after being persuaded by their families."

Through both these statements, the Indian government has conveyed some vital messages to the public: one, Indian Muslims are law-abiding citizens and are indeed patriots; two, al-Qaeda and the ISIS are not a serious threat to India. It can be argued that the Indian government is right to convey these messages as ordinary citizens in any country, not just India, are never a threat to law and order. Also, jihadist organisations can never take over our societies, cities or governments. Rather, they will remain a terror group, surviving in the dark alleys of our streets, trying to connect with disaffected youth and occasionally explode a bomb. The only real jihadist threat to India could emerge when Pakistan collapses, especially if the Taliban mutate into an ISIS-like force and start targeting Shia Muslims. Even in an extreme eventuality, India has the military preponderance to deal with such a situation. The Indian military, like an antibiotic that functions 24×7, works for the security of Indians non-stop and effectively.

However, India must not slip into its default mode of coexistence consciousness. Thanks to India's experience with its celebrated ideas, we have coexisted with Maoist terrorism for more than half a century. It

also means that the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) will continue to recruit Hindus and Muslims alike for terror and espionage. A simple Google search reveals that Indians were routinely arrested over the past decade for coming into contact with the ISI in different parts of the country.

India must not get complacent about terror threats for the following reasons: the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai demonstrated that a group of just 10 jihadists can launch a major attack that can strike at a nation's confidence and create insecurity in a major metropolis; the 9/11 attacks demonstrated that a group of 19 terrorists can join hands with a few others and alter the course of foreign policies of dozens of countries for several decades.

When security analysts warn of jihadist threats, the argument is never that all Indian Muslims, or all Muslims of any country, are terrorists. Most often three categories of people advance the argument that all Muslims are terrorists. One, well-meaning liberal apologists and secular writers transport their fears into the mass media by arguing that all Muslims are being labelled as terrorists. Two, anti-Islam extremists who openly argue that all Muslims are terrorists because Islamic scriptures teach them to be so, though there is ample proof that most Muslims do not follow the Quran literally. Three, Muslims themselves, acting out of their insecurity, begin to think and argue that all Muslims are being labelled as terrorists. All these three categories of people fail to acknowledge that real Islamophobes are individuals like Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, Mullah Mohammad Omar and Ayman al-Zawahiri whose actions create a fear of Islam among non-Muslims. The third category is especially relevant to India where Muslims are boldly reluctant to abandon the label of minority, as it accords the Muslim community leaders some benefits from the Indian state.

On January 8, this writer appeared on a programme hosted by journalist Ravish Kumar on *NDTV India* channel. During the discussion, which was focused on the jihadist attack a day earlier on the French satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, Ravish Kumar argued that all Muslims were being labelled as terrorists and that when a school was attacked in America, Western countries did not call the attackers Christian terrorists. A serious discussion of such debates and ground realities brings out contrary points. For example, in Pakistan itself not all attackers and bombers are called Islamic terrorists, jihadists or Islamists. Notably, Balochi rebels fighting for the independence of Balochistan from Pakistan are Muslims, but they are not described as jihadists because they do not intend to impose sharia rule. In other words, only those Pakistani attackers are called jihadists or Islamists

who describe themselves as jihadists or are fighting to establish sharia rule are called jihadists or Islamists.

(It should be also mentioned that in India, not all terrorists are called Hindu terrorists. For example, Maoists are mostly Hindus but they are not called Hindu terrorists because they are not fighting to establish the Hindu rule. However, some individuals were recently described as Hindu or saffron terrorists because their motive was to establish a Hindu Rashtra. In Sri Lanka, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were not called Hindu terrorists because they were fighting for a Tamil cause, not for Hindu rule. In Ireland, Catholics and Protestants fought bloody battles, but they were not called Christian terrorists because they were not fighting to establish a Christian caliphate. Conversely, Western countries do use terms like Christian supremacist or Christian fundamentalist when the nature of an attack requires such labelling. The argument here is this: al-Qaeda, the ISIS or the Taliban are called jihadists and Islamists because they stand for sharia rule.)

ISIS-like jihadist threats emerge from the domain of ideas, and it is not clear if the Indian government even knows how Muslim societies are growing within India when Rajnath Singh says that Indian Muslims are not “swayed by fundamentalist ideologies”. When the home minister says that “just a handful of Indian youth” joined the ISIS, the people of India have a right to know how many Indians joined the jihadist group. To be fair to the Indian government, it is possible that it is unaware of the accurate picture. The Indian people's right to know is not a legal concept, but it emerges from their ideal of liberty: while autocratic countries like China and Saudi Arabia can crush the jihadists, India is a democratic country that derives its strengths from the law and people. The jihadist threat should be known to the citizens who are the first line of defence. “The war of terrorism has to be fought by the society,” said India's Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju two days after Rajnath Singh spoke.

It is worrying that Indian journalists publish numerous reports that attribute terror-related developments to anonymous intelligence officials. The journalists themselves are not at fault for that. Most often, they fail to find reliable information.

It has been a sad spectacle over the past decade that even a constable felt empowered to utter “ISI” in terror cases. The Indian government must do two things on priority: one, issue a guideline to the media not to attribute any terrorism-related threat to anonymous administrative and intelligence officials; and two, create a federal information agency that obtains real-time information about all kinds

of terrorist incidents and delivers vetted information to journalists and key government leaders in the states and New Delhi. Such an information-flow mechanism will prevent media spectacles and embarrassments like the one seen in the recent exploding of a boat, off the coast of Gujarat. The versions of the Coast Guard and the government on the incident were contradictory. Media practitioners, through their acts of reporting and debates, are vital to an open society. Their work needs to be facilitated in a healthy way.

Indian government officials must also realise that fighting jihadism and terror threats must happen in a way that the public is fully aware of: this is the benchmark of a vibrant democratic republic. Elsewhere, this writer has argued that India must update its laws to include prevention of radicalisation, both online and offline; and a system of sting operations must be created that allow intelligence and police officials to catch youth as they enter the terror's recruitment tunnel.

For a democratic republic like India, fake encounters are a blot on its polity: they damage the morale of intelligence and police officials, corrode the republic's soul and undermine India's commitment to create a free society for its citizens. Compared with encounters, sting operations are procedured under law and abide by the constitution. If America is safe today, it is not because of the global strategy of the US, but because of the work of transportation security officials and sting operations by the police.

Over the past year or so, some Indian Muslim youth based in Australia and Singapore travelled to Syria for jihad. Famously, four youth from Mumbai flew as part of Shia pilgrims for Iraq where they joined the ISIS. More than a dozen Muslim youth from Hyderabad were stopped in Kolkata as they were heading for Iraq. Indian youth also travelled to the Pakistan-Afghanistan region through the India-Nepal corridor and later some of them joined the ISIS in Syria. Some Indian expatriates based in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other Middle Eastern countries too joined the ISIS. It also appears that some Indian Muslims based in the US, the UK and other Western countries established contacts with the ISIS.

Last year, at an event in Assam, Rajnath Singh said that 18 Muslim youth were lured by the ISIS ideology. Indian media reports have put the number of Indian Muslims joining the ISIS and al-Qaeda in the past year from a few dozens to 300. Days after Rajnath Singh spoke in Jaipur, Fahad Shaikh, one of the Indians fighting for the ISIS, called home in Mumbai. "I am happy with my jihadi work, I won't come back to India," he said.

Know the enemy, know its enterprise and debate it in a very public way.



# ISIS Spreads Its Tentacles in a Dozen Indian States

**I**nformation available from open-source media regarding pro-ISIS elements in India indicates that intelligence agencies have observed jihadist activities in a dozen Indian states. This article reviews the current jihadist threat to India from the Islamic State, or ISIS, as well as from Pakistan, which seems to be reviving militancy in Punjab. Three days before the July 27 terror attacks in Gurdaspur district in Punjab, a media report noted that Punjab “is reportedly witnessing a revival of Khalistan Movement”, basically a terror network backed by Pakistan. This article also argues that the Indian government and the judiciary need to put curbs on social media networks and the Urdu press to curtail pro-jihadist rationalisations.

If Liberty, Equality and Fraternity is a legacy of the French Revolution, the post-9/11 reality of global jihad seems to be pointing towards another veritable component to the cause of human freedom: Security.

On July 21, journalist Aman Sharma reported that the Union Home Ministry would soon hold “a meeting with states to discuss the growing influence of ISIS in the country”. Sometime in July, the Home Ministry prepared a note that aims to evolve a national Plan of Action against the “phenomenon of ISIS”. Sharma said: “Intelligence agencies have raised concerns over indications of ISIS influence in at least a dozen states, including the sensitive state of Jammu & Kashmir.” These concerns were flagged by intelligence agencies, Sharma noted in his report, especially for “Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh among a dozen states in this regard”.

According to the report, the July note observes: “As per available intelligence inputs, very few number of Indian youth(s) have joined ISIS after travelling to Iraq and Syria. Further, intelligence/security agencies have foiled the plan of some youth(s) to travel to Iraq/Syria who are under counselling and monitoring at present. A certain number of ISIS

sympathisers are also under surveillance by security agencies.” According to the report, Home Secretary L.C. Goyal, who is working to evolve a national strategy on counter-radicalisation, had expressed concern in an earlier note dated June 20 that “radicalisation of youth is increasingly becoming an issue of 'serious concern' in the government in the context of the ISIS”.

India has some alert minds, such as National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, at the helm. According to a media report, Doval, who took a two-day trip to Kashmir, on July 21-22 called “a high-level security meeting of 10 states to discuss the 'silent' threat”. The report also noted that former Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Syed Asif Ibrahim, a counter-radicalisation expert, has been engaged by the government for a role in Kashmir. On July 24, another media report noted that “top-level representatives of 10 states, including Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, which is reportedly witnessing revival of Khalistan Movement, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and the north-east Indian states, will be present” at the upcoming meeting of states on the influence of ISIS.

### **Indian Muslim Youth Joining al-Qaeda and ISIS**

Speaking at a counterterrorism conference in Jaipur, Home Minister Rajnath Singh said on March 19: “Influence of the Islamic State on the Indian youth(s) is negligible as just a handful of Indian youth(s) have joined the ISIS and some have also returned after being persuaded by their families.” At a public event in Assam last year, Rajnath Singh said: “In such a large country, only 18 Muslim youth have been attracted to the ISIS.” Over the course of the past 12 months, Indian media reports about the number of Indian Muslims joining ISIS and al-Qaeda or expressing support for them has varied from 4 to 300. This month, reports indicated that 11 Indians may have travelled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS.

While the actual figures may not be known, it seems that the number of Indian Muslims attracted to the jihadist call of ISIS could be something between a few scores and 300. Indian Muslims who joined ISIS have followed several paths: four individuals flew directly from Mumbai to Iraq; one Kashmiri youth based in Australia went directly to Syria via Turkey; some youth from Tamil Nadu based in Singapore travelled to Syria; and others were Indian youth from the United Arab Emirates and other Middle Eastern countries.

Areeb Majeed, one of the four Mumbai youth who returned, said that he had counted 13 Indians at a terror training camp in Syria. Youth

of Indian origin from the United Kingdom and South Africa too are suspected to be in Syria. Also, some of a dozen Indian Muslims who went to the Pakistan-Afghanistan region appear to have travelled to Syria to join the Islamic State.

### **Rising Support for ISIS in Jammu & Kashmir**

Of special importance is Jammu & Kashmir, which borders Pakistan. Lt.-Gen. Subrata Saha of the Indian Army noted recently that during 2014 “there were five instances when we saw the flags (of ISIS) on display at different places, on four occasions in Srinagar and one occasion at Shopian”. A string of media reports in June-July this year indicates that there is increasing support for ISIS among the Kashmiri youth. On June 12, ISIS flags were hoisted during a protest following the Friday prayers at a mosque in Srinagar as well as at another mosque in Kupwara district. On June 19, the ISIS flag was waved by a masked youth in a rally organised by separatists in Anantnag district. On June 26, the ISIS flag was waved during a protest in Srinagar.

The act of waving ISIS flags is mostly of a political nature. On July 17 and 18, ISIS and Pakistani flags were waved during a protest in Srinagar against the house arrest of secessionist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. On July 24, the ISIS flag was shown in Srinagar.

In the past, Kashmiri youth waved Pakistani flags as a form of anti-India protest. The Pakistani flag is now being increasingly replaced by the ISIS flag in these protests, which mostly occur after the Friday prayers. This does not mean that these youth are essentially members of ISIS. However, an Indian media report dated July 22 indicates that “32 youth were reported to have joined the ranks of militants” in Jammu & Kashmir this year, not necessarily with ISIS.

A group of 11 Kashmiri youth who joined the Pakistan-backed terror group Hizbul Mujahideen this year released a video of themselves dressed in military fatigues and carrying guns. The video was shot somewhere in a forest in Kashmir. They are aged between 19 and 29; and ten of them have been identified by the local security officials. According to a media report, the number of foreign terrorists in Kashmir is over 50. Journalist Bashaarat Masood wrote in a July 26 report that “33 young men... have joined the ranks of militancy in the first six months of the year in the [Kashmir] Valley, taking the total number of its active militants to 142. Of the 142, [as many as] 54 are foreigners, mostly from Pakistan, and 88 are local youth”.

Speaking on the Kargil Vijay Diwas – which marks India's victory in Kargil on July 26, 1999, in the largest Pakistani state-supported jihadist war against India in recent times – Lt.-General D.S. Hooda, the chief of Indian Army's Northern Command, told reporters that ISIS was “creeping towards this side” in India from Pakistan. Hooda said: “There are no large footprints of ISIS in Jammu & Kashmir. Yes, there are incidents of flag waving that we have seen. Is it a matter of concern, yes it is. Because ISIS is such an organisation with such radical sort of ideology and views that we should make sure that it doesn't even get a hold.”

Lt.-General Hooda also noted that in recent years, the number of Kashmiri youth joining militancy had shot up. He stated: “There are reports that last year [in 2014], according to our intelligence figures, about 60 local recruits, mostly from south Kashmir, and this year, about 30-35 is the figure that we have [of youth who joined militancy]. The number is not that large that it will transform the security situation in Jammu & Kashmir.... But obviously, it is a matter of concern when young people have now slowly again started picking up the gun because two-three years back, the numbers were single digit – five, six or seven – that was the kind of recruitment taking place.” There are other estimates indicating that about 100 terrorists were able to infiltrate every year into Jammu & Kashmir from Pakistan in recent years.

The ISIS threat to India is complicated because there is always a risk that the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), known for creating and nurturing terrorist groups to fight against Afghanistan and India, could rope in some of the ISIS-affiliated jihadists in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. India has always been alert to the problem of state-supported jihadist organisations. At the March 19 conference, Rajnath Singh rightly said: “The source of most terrorist activity in India lies across our borders. It is unfortunate that even after paying such a heavy cost for itself, Pakistan and its associates find it difficult to understand that there are no 'good terrorists and bad terrorists'.”

The reference to “good terrorists” is generally not comprehensible to unsuspecting audiences in the West who come to think that there are some “good” Taliban that Pakistan uses. However, for Indian audiences, it is clear that the “good” Taliban are those terrorists which Pakistan uses to advance jihad against Afghanistan and India.

The fact that India has always been alert to the Pakistani state-backed jihadist threat does not automatically follow that New Delhi has also been meeting the challenge. The default Indian position has been to reach out for peace; its best example is how Pakistani army ruler

General Pervez Musharraf, who masterminded the jihadist incursion into Kargil in 1999 and under whose watch the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks were planned, was hosted in Delhi and Agra as if he was an envoy of peace.

### **Put Curbs on Urdu Press and Social Media Networks**

While India has the military preponderance to deal with the Pakistani state, the work of counter-radicalisation in India should have both the government and the Indian judiciary staying alert to the use of social media by jihadist groups, as well as the propagation of jihad and rationalisations of Muslim grievances by Urdu and other media outlets, both offline and online.

In his landmark speech in Birmingham on July 20, British Prime Minister David Cameron noted: “As we counter this ideology [of Islamic extremism], a key part of our strategy must be to tackle both parts of the creed – the non-violent and violent.” India must remain aware of this challenge as various Islamist groups seek to get a foothold in Indian Muslim societies through non-violent means.

In the post-9/11 years, Left-liberal groups defended the terrorists' right to free speech. The Washington DC-based Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), to which this writer is affiliated, has highlighted through a series of research papers how jihadist groups are using social media such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and Tumblr to propagate jihad, offer video tutorials on assembling bombs and recruit terrorists. In the early days when ISIS was yet to make a mark, attempts by MEMRI to have jihadist content on the Internet removed was countered by officials from social media networks saying that it would be violation of free speech and was not humanly possible to do so.

In a January 30 essay published in *Forbes* magazine, Yigal Carmon and Steven Stalinsky of MEMRI argued thus: “One can hardly imagine the development of the global jihad movement without the Internet. An entire generation of Muslim youth(s) has been and continues to be radicalised online by violent images and incitements to murder.... These [social media] companies should be questioned in a transparent framework, and must commit to tackling the problem of eradicating violent jihadi content from their platforms. It is time for the government to catch up to terrorist use of the Internet and create and enforce new laws to address this problem.”

A purely technological argument offered is that since most social media networks already use algorithms to prevent child abuse content

from appearing on their websites, they must similarly prevent the publication of jihadist content through algorithms and proactive monitoring.

Taking its cue from David Cameron's call for a counter-radicalisation strategy, the Indian government must also introduce curbs on media outlets that promote Islamic extremism by offering justifications for it on the grounds of Muslim grievance. This is especially important for India where a section of the Urdu press is engaged in rationalising the jihadist arguments against democratic governments as well as against liberal and reformist voices among Muslims.

Two examples from India's Urdu press here are highly relevant. First, *Roznama Urdu Times*, a Mumbai-based Urdu daily newspaper, published a leading article by Muhammad Najeeb Qasmi Sanbhali in its issue dated December 26, arguing that Muslims being converted to Hinduism are justified to be killed. The article quoted Hazrat Ayesha, wife of the Prophet Muhammad, as saying that the Prophet had said: "If a person leaves his religion (of Islam), then murder him."

The article, written in the context of the *ghar wapsi* (reconversion) debate emanating from Hindu groups' attempts at reconversion of Muslims and Christians, quoted verses of the Quran, Hadiths (sayings and deeds of the Prophet), as well as the teachings of the Righteous Caliphs (the first four caliphs of Islam: Abu Bakr, Umar ibn Khattab, Usman ibn Affan and Ali ibn Abi Talib) to justify the killing of apostates, i.e. Muslims who leave Islam. It should be mentioned that the killing of apostates is a major argument forwarded by jihadist organisations across the world, including Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and ISIS. The Urdu daily stated: "In this verse [152 of Quran's chapter Al-Araf], Allah has clearly ordered that an apostate be killed.... In fact, the first interpreter of the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad, has clearly ordered the killing of a person becoming apostate."

The second example is that of *Haftroza Nai Duniya*, a mass-circulation Urdu weekly newspaper published and edited by former parliamentarian Shahid Siddiqui. The newspaper's issue dated May 25-31, 2015, was devoted to the issue of "terrorism and Islam". Through a series of articles, whose authors were not identified, the Urdu weekly narrated a series of grievances, both historical from the era of the Prophet Muhammad to those in contemporary times, to inculcate in the minds of Muslim youth the same arguments that jihadist organisations are advancing.

For example, *Haftroza Nai Duniya* argues that jihad is essentially defensive in nature and all wars involving Muslims have always been because of aggression on the part of non-Muslims right from the days of the Prophet Muhammad to date. By not naming the authors of the articles, *Haftroza Nai Duniya* has sought to escape individual responsibility for the views expressed in them, but in such a situation it will be right to infer that these views are of the newspaper's editor Shahid Siddiqui.

The newspaper published conspiracy theories and hypotheses such as: American soldiers chopped off Osama bin Laden's body into pieces and threw them on the mountains of Afghanistan as they were returning from the 2011 operation in Abbottabad; "it was the womb of American imperialism that gave birth to the so-called Islamic terrorism"; and there is an "organised conspiracy from Hollywood to television serials" to facilitate American foreign policy in the Middle East. It also ran this line: "The Islamic State's massacres: After all, who is mutilating the character of Islam?" – "There is only one answer: America."

Shahid Siddiqui's *Haftroza Nai Duniya* justified the massacre of nearly 900 Jews of Banu Quraiza on the Prophet Muhammad's orders. It should be noted that the Banu Quraiza Jews had surrendered, offering to leave behind their wealth. If an Indian journalist deems it fit to justify the massacre of nearly a thousand surrendered persons, one is left wondering how he is different from ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi who, too, beheads numerous surrendered Shias, Christians and gays in Syria and Iraq today.

### **The Continuing Threat of Pakistan**

As long as Pakistan continues to exist, India will have a threat to its security. This is purely because of the ideological nature of the Pakistani state, currently being strengthened with American money and arms. The July 27 terror attacks in Gurdaspur occurred even as the Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was engaged in recruiting youth from refugee camps in Indonesia of Myanmar Muslims.

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Indian youth should remain aware of the jihadist threat that is seeping into society. However, they should also remain alert to jihadists seeking to cause fear among masses. Jihadists will succeed if people start acting paranoid, thereby hurting the social cohesion of India and damaging relations between various communities.

While the security forces, intelligence agencies and police departments work to check the phenomenon of jihadism, counterextremism will succeed only when Indians join hands and pledge to work as a cohesive whole. On Twitter and other social media platforms, one sees Indian youth getting concerned about the jihadist threat to India. A piece of advice to the youth of India who are in their tempestuous age of teens and twenties: yours is an age when you should have fun, go to college and study, fall in love (but do not convert in order to marry), and work hard to succeed in life. This will ensure that the Republic of India is secure for the next half a century and more.



# **SECTION IV**

## **The Roots Of Pakistani Jihadism**



# The Ideology of Pakistan in Conflict

Pakistan is marking its 60th birthday in 2007. In the year it was created, an official in the United States embassy in Moscow examined how ideology and circumstances interacted with each other to define the internal policies of the Soviet Union and its conduct in the outside world. Pakistan was created in the name of religion. For the Bolsheviks, communism was the ideal; for new Pakistanis, Islam became the defining principle. It is relevant to see how the existence of Pakistan remains mired in its ideological struggle against local circumstances, and how this struggle defines its internal policies and external relations in the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

In *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947, Mr X., later identified as George F. Kennan (diplomat and historian), wrote that the political personality of Soviet power was “the product of ideology and circumstances”, the ideology of the Bolsheviks having originated from the Russian revolutionary movement and the circumstances of power which they exercised. As the ideology of the Bolsheviks defined the policies to be pursued inside Russia and in its foreign relations, the new rulers in Islamabad drew their ideals from the movement for Pakistan; these ideals began shaping Pakistan's internal policies and external relations.

However, there was conflict. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, having steered the Pakistan movement in the name of Islam, now wanted democratic pluralism to be its basis. Jinnah became the first logical casualty of this contradiction, as the ideals of the Pakistan movement proved too autonomous to be overcome by his message of secularism and democracy. His “death” remains a mystery. Jinnah's speech advocating pluralism and secularism went missing for years. The defining principles of the new nation were: Muslims could not live with Hindus and India; Islam would shape the new nation; Kashmir would be part of Pakistan as it was Muslim; and anything un-Islamic would be rejected.

The new rulers of Pakistan, like the Bolsheviks, began work with a set of concepts. Internally, local languages and nationalities such as Balochis and Sindhis were suppressed. Externally, the scope of the new rulers' ideological ambition was illustrated by the fact that before the 1965 war with India, Pakistan launched an insurgency in Kashmir; it was not named operation Kashmir freedom but "Operation Gibraltar", inspired by an Islamic landing at the island in 711 CE. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which always recruited bearded religious men at its helm, became the "ideological guardian" of what is known as Nazariya-e-Pakistan, or the ideology of Pakistan.

Sixty years on, General Pervez Musharraf's half-hearted attempt to chart a new course for Pakistan drives it into logical conflict with the process in which ideology and realities have tried to override each other since 1947. Inspired by an inherited ideology, Musharraf was the architect of the 1999 Kargil war in Kashmir. However, American pressure on Pakistan after September 11 forced him to alter track: firstly, he allied himself with the United States in its anti-terror campaign to topple the Taliban from Afghanistan; secondly, he set off a bargaining process with India over Kashmir; thirdly, he pledged to initiate reforms in society and the state apparatus. These attempts did not fit into the process on which Pakistan was launched by its new rulers at its creation. For example, Musharraf, albeit under external pressure, recruited his men to top posts in the ISI; still there were several assassination bids on him, which a Pakistani lawmaker blamed on the "ISI inside the ISI". The military intelligence, driven by an ideological motive, has always acted independently of the government. A soldier was among those hanged for attempts on Musharraf's life.

The ideological imperative of Pakistan is also exposed in its demand to unite the two parts of Kashmir, while ignoring a similar situation in which Punjab is happily shared with India. In the latter case, Islam is not an issue. General Musharraf's claim that Pakistan has eliminated al-Qaeda contradicts the reality on the ground. There are three categories of militants in Pakistan: first, al-Qaeda militants who came from across the world to fight the Soviet "infidels" in Afghanistan; second, sectarian Shia and Sunni groups like the Tehrik-e-Jafria and the Sipah-e-Sahaba funded by Iran and Saudi Arabia after the 1979 Iranian Revolution; third, a post-1989 breed of Jihadist groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and al-Badr. The first two are under pressure from Musharraf's anti-terror policies; the third breed of militants was created by the ISI, which thought, after the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, that it could achieve the

same feat in Kashmir. These post-1989 “Jihadi groups”, as they are popularly known in Pakistan, were also behind the July 7 suicide bombings in London’s underground trains. To achieve its ideological goals, the ISI established training camps in Pakistani Kashmir in the 1990s.

After September 11, however, General Musharraf was under pressure and these groups changed their tactics: unlike previously when they had launched all-out terror attacks in India’s Jammu & Kashmir state, they now adopted a policy of “intermittent attacks”, lying low for some time but keeping the issue alive. The training camps were not dismantled. The Federal Bureau of Investigation of the United States reported the existence of terror camps in 2004, and by 2007 a new breed of training camps came up, this time on Pakistan’s Afghan border. It is correct that Pakistan briefly stopped supporting the Taliban after September 11. However, within the next few years, India, capitalising on its traditional goodwill, acquired massive support in Afghan society and government. Pakistan failed to find any group that it could call its own. Millions of Afghan refugees, who returned from Pakistan after September 11 and could potentially become its allies, also blamed the Pakistanis for destroying their society by backing the Taliban.

Pakistan, isolated in its own neighbourhood, brought back the Taliban in 2006. The reversal in Pakistani policy was evident when General Musharraf made it a point to take a five-day visit to China, just before George W. Bush visited India and Pakistan in 2006. In Pakistan’s tribal areas, there is a new phrase in circulation: Pakistani Taliban. Consequently, the international troops led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) witnessed an upsurge in Taliban-led attacks in Afghanistan, which were sponsored from across the border. Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan called for taking the war on terror to its “source”. But Islamabad is more likely to continue to prop up the Taliban, and Pakistan – in its drive to retain its ideological basis – encounters opposing circumstances. The March 9 suspension of Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhary, seen as President Musharraf’s attempt to bring in a compliant judiciary to approve his re-election later in the year, again underlines a recurring reality: the drive of an ideological state to acquire stability amidst opposing circumstances. However, there is a way forward.

George F. Kennan noted that the Bolsheviks realised the need for ideological consolidation inside Russia and externally against the West. A new elite, of mainly the influential Punjabi business class, is forming

in Pakistan, though its shape is not yet clear. Sensing an economic stake in a rising India, it is taking hesitant steps in opening the Kashmir border. This new elite, unlike the rulers of 1947 who were inspired by ideology, is beginning to understand the future national interests of the Pakistani people. Ideology is not junked yet but there is a shift away from it, in search of new ideals. The breed of ideological militants and thinkers, though retaining their bite, is becoming irrelevant in Pakistan's mainstream. The traditional ISI can now be described as "the ISI within ISI". This is a new outcome, though not yet an autonomous reality of its own.

In this new outstanding circumstance, India has enhanced its stake in the democratisation of Pakistan. Most Pakistanis want democratic stability and normalisation of relations with India; the two could pave the way for people to travel without visa from Kabul to Kolkata, with de facto unification of Kashmir and Punjab. The new elite ought to abandon "ideology" and adopt "people" at the centre of policymaking. In 2004, Pakistani teenagers, with the flags of the two countries painted on their cheeks, turned out in Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium to watch a cricket match with India. It is their future, not Islam, that should inform policymaking. This can be achieved only in the framework of democratic pluralism.

The imperative of a democratic framework is that Pakistan and India situate their national interests in the new circumstance. Pakistan must, to feed its burgeoning population, see its national interest in India's economic success. India, for its reason of regional security, must see its national interest in democratic stability in Pakistan. New Delhi can look for security in a democratic regime in Islamabad, a regime that is accountable to its people and to the international community. This is also the right moment: the US is engaged in the region; a NATO mission is stabilising Afghanistan; and India is emerging as a great power. An unstable and undemocratic Pakistan is not in the interest of Afghanistan, the European Union, the US or India. Democracies need defending and it is their responsibility to make a concerted effort to bring stability to South Asia.

Further, India needs to instil trust in the Pakistani elite. The Bolsheviks sensed an ideological necessity to create dictatorial power in Russia; the new elite in Islamabad must realise, unlike the Bolsheviks, that an ideological necessity no longer exists for the continuance of military rule. There is also no reason why Balochs, Sindhis and Pashtuns should not have greater autonomy. As a test case, Pakistan must repeal its law declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims and give more

freedom to Christians and Hindus. As the Bolsheviks yielded to the emergence of a different type of elite by the 1980s, the new elite in Pakistan has a different, though unclear, concept of how the country should look like in future. It is taking the occasional first steps in the right direction. Sometimes internal movements adjust their methods and objectives with help from outside. We have learnt from the Cold War that internal movements need external sponsors. Pakistan, conflicted about its ideological course, cannot on itself choose a positive course: the West has a role to play.

# The Islamism of Muhammad Iqbal

**M**uhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), Pakistan's national poet whose birthday on November 9 is celebrated by Islamist organisations and Urdu litterateurs across South Asia, is known for promulgating the idea of Pakistan, engendering Islamism among Muslim youth, lauding socialism which he did not follow and ridiculing democracy under which he thought people are counted and not weighed. Iqbal has been the subject of numerous doctoral studies and academic books, but his poetry is best known for radicalising Urdu-speaking Muslim youth. His couplets are on the lips of the followers of the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan, India and elsewhere.

On December 29, 1930, addressing the 25th session of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad, Iqbal dismissed Indian nationalism as “false” and demanded a separate state for Muslims comprising north-western provinces, now Pakistan. The Islamist thinker defined Islam as “an ethical ideal plus a certain kind of polity”, which he explained as “a social structure regulated by a legal system and animated” by Islam. As India emerged into a vibrant republic as conceived by Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar, the malfunctioning state of Pakistan grew out of Iqbal's vision. In his speech at Allahabad, Iqbal was clearly sowing the seeds of sharia rule, notwithstanding his attempt to convince Hindus otherwise.

In a bid to justify the Islamic basis of the Muslim state he was proposing, Iqbal devoted his speech to disparaging the territorial conception of Europe's nation-states, lamented that the outlook of the younger generation of Muslims was coloured by territorial boundaries of their countries, and defined himself as “a man who is not despaired of Islam as a living force for freeing the outlook of man from its geographical limitations”. In this thinking, Iqbal is a front-runner for Taliban and al-Qaeda ideologues of today. In jihadi videos, Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters cite Iqbal to demand a global Islamic caliphate by rejecting the geographical boundaries of Afghanistan, Pakistan and



other Muslim states. The jihadi magazine *Azan* recently quoted a couplet in which Iqbal dismisses Muslim states as idols because their boundaries are territorial: "The country/state is the biggest among these new idols; its clothing is the shroud of religion."

In Pakistan, Iqbal is revered as the country's ideological founder. To strengthen antisemitism, Pakistani columnists cite Iqbal for his anti-Jewish statements and couplets like "The veins and life of the English (people) are in the clutches of Jews." To justify Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws, writers note that Iqbal, in his book *Zarb-e-Kaleem*, praised Ghazi Ilmuddin, who killed Rajpal for blasphemy in Lahore, and Ghazi Abdul Qayyum, who killed Nathu Ram in Karachi, both victims being Hindus. One Urdu columnist celebrates suicide bombings by quoting Iqbal: "This martyrdom, as if it's treading in the path of love; People think it's easy to become a Muslim!" In his book *Bal-e-Jibril*, Iqbal opposed the separation of religion from the state: "Whether it be the pomp of monarchy or democracy's show; if religion is separated from politics, what results is Genghis' tyranny."

Pakistan's veteran editor Majeed Nizami gives Iqbal's famous couplet on how Islamic conquerors rode horses into the oceans of darkness a "nuclear" twist: "Our horses are our nuclear weapons." Iqbal's poetry is action-oriented, rousing Muslims to action. Iqbal transformed Nietzsche's idea of superman into the ideal of *mard-e-momin*, or pure Muslim. In *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal's opening words are: "The Quran is a book which emphasises deed rather than ideas." According to a columnist, "Iqbal is the Quran amongst poets and a poet of the Quran." Iqbal's poetry derives Quranic authority and radicalises youth. In a Persian couplet, he says: "Muslims are ill-bred and dressed in coarse clothes/and whose activities have put Gabriel under tumult; Having come to demolish the mark of other communities/as if this community has become a burden on the world."

Mohammad Shoaib Adil, editor of Lahore-based *Nia Zamana*, perhaps the only liberal magazine in Urdu language, says that Iqbal was out to conquer the world for Islam and through his poetry planted the seeds of global Islamism. Iqbal's *jangjuana shairi*, war-transpiring poetry, has been included in the textbooks and is widely quoted in the media in Pakistan. Adil notes that clerics and liberals previously have debated Iqbal's ideas about *ijtihad* (consensus and reasoning as sources of lawmaking), but any discussion on this aspect of his thought gave way to a jihadi narrative following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in the mid-1990s, and after 9/11 even liberal writers stopped seeing any benefit in such arguments.

In India, where a vibrant democratic culture over the past six decades has created abundant free space for journalists, poets, writers, dramatists and others for the expression of their views, Iqbal's poetry ought to be examined critically, especially for the ideas that are drawing Muslim youth to radical Islam. However, Urdu litterateurs in India have focused on the literary merit of his poetry and the depth of his thought as if these were neutral in meaning, thereby reproducing volumes of research that are celebratory in tone and sympathetic to Islamists.

As Pakistan slides into an anarchic form of Islamism, a democratic criticism of Iqbal's ideas is imperative. First, departments of Urdu and politics in Indian universities should work jointly to research on the political impact of Iqbal's ideas on Muslim youth. This is necessary as most often students of Urdu lack the skills required of a social scientist.

Second, most Muslim scholars will continue to nurse a sympathetic relationship with Iqbal, reproducing his work and reinforcing Islamism. It is essential that non-Muslim scholars, especially those based in think tanks that are not limited by academic boundaries, undertake independent research on Iqbal. Third, Iqbal's poetry is celebrated by religious groups like the Jamaat-e-Islami in India. There is a need to foster a public discourse on Iqbal's ideology. This can be done by academic institutions, think tanks and journalists through the electronic and social media, and such efforts should contrast Iqbal's Islamism with the cosmopolitanism of Ghalib, Faiz and others.

# Jinnah And the Genie of Islamism

**T**wo shades of debate exist on the politics of Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), the founder of Pakistan whose birthday is celebrated on December 25. First, liberal commentators argue that Jinnah was a secular leader who advocated a state for Indian Muslims, not an Islamic state. They cite his statements in support of democratic values, pluralism and minority rights such as “The new state would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people”; “Muslims will cease being Muslims; Hindus will cease being Hindus, not religiously, but politically”; and “Pakistan is not a theocracy.” This class of advocates has been marginalised in Pakistan’s policymaking and school textbooks.

Second, right-wing writers and Islamic clerics attribute Jinnah’s ideas to the Quran and Sunnah, or the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. They argue that Jinnah stood for an Islamic state and cite his mission’s fulfilment as expressed in the popular response to the following slogan: What is the meaning of Pakistan? The chorus: *La ilaha illallah* (There is no deity but Allah). This class of advocates, supported by successive governments, rules over the country’s mainstream.

Akbar S. Ahmed, author of *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: The Search for Saladin*, notes two stages of Jinnah’s personality: in the first, he is a secular person and stays so amid the Hindu politics of the 1920s. In the second stage, he is tutored by the Islamist poet Muhammad Iqbal, resulting in a complete intellectual break from 1937 onwards, when Jinnah started relying increasingly on Islam to advance Muslim separatism.

From 1937 onwards and even after the creation of Pakistan, Jinnah’s speeches were laced with imageries from Islam. He made statements such as “Muslims... have not been crushed during the last 1,000 years”; “I shall never allow Muslims to be slaves of Hindus”; “The cows that

Hindus worship Muslims eat, the villains that Hindus malign, Muslims idolise”; “The goal of Pakistan is not only to get freedom and autonomy but the Islamic concept of life”; “It is Prophet Muhammad’s spiritual blessing that Pakistan came into being. Now it is Pakistanis’ responsibility to turn it into the model (state) of the Righteous Caliphs”; and “We must... present to the world an economic system based on true Islamic concept of equality.”

Jinnah articulated the Islamic character for the state of Pakistan, as Iqbal desired, thus: “The Quran is a complete code for the Muslims – a religious, social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, and penal code.” Asked how Pakistan’s constitution would look like, Jinnah responded: “Who am I to give you a constitution? The prophet of Islam had given us a constitution (Quran) 1,300 years ago. We have to simply follow and implement it, and based on it we have to establish in our state Islam’s great system of governance.” Rejecting the atheistic conception of socialism, he said: “We do not want any flag except... the Crescent and Star. Islam is our guide and the complete code of our life... We do not want any isms, socialisms, communisms or national socialisms.” Jinnah was articulating global Islamism.

Iqbal, who promulgated the idea of Pakistan in 1930 and is celebrated along with Jinnah as the country’s founding father, wrote a popular Urdu couplet: *Hazaron saal nargis apni benoori pe roti hai/Bari mushkil se hota hai chaman mein deedar paida* (For thousands of years the narcissus laments its colourlessness; with great difficulty the one with true vision is born in the garden). Some writers think Iqbal was referring to the Prophet Muhammad, but Akbar S. Ahmed says the scholars of South Asia agree that Iqbal was speaking of his own success in converting Jinnah to the cause of an Islamic state.

Post-1937, Jinnah did make statements in support of democratic values, but under Iqbal’s influence he had been primarily cultivating a religious audience. In a speech before the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947, he said: “You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state.” It was a bombshell; his audience was unprepared for it. This epic speech disappeared from the next day’s newspapers and government records. The civil service was no longer in ideological consonance with Jinnah, and it possibly prevented medical aid from reaching him in his dying hours.

In the sociology of nations, facts are sometimes not important; it is more important what people consider to be facts. Jinnah unleashed a

genie. The search for an Islamic identity meant that women stopped wearing saris; people began choosing Arabic names; Pakistan looked to Arabs rather than to its Indian heritage; its origin was calculated back to the arrival of Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 CE; and the civilisations of Taxila, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, which existed for thousands of years before Islam, were erased from memory. Even liberal writers began searching for an Iqbal in the cosmopolitan Ghalib, or for Jinnah in Saladin, who conquered Jerusalem.

It is immaterial what kind of Pakistan Jinnah stood for; what is consequential is the genie. In Arab folklore, the genie granted wishes; in Pakistan it kills people. The genie, imbued with free will, is Islamism; it refuses to return into the bottle. In Pakistan today, the mainstream is right-wing, Islamist and increasingly becoming xenophobic. If Pakistan were a Hollywood movie, it is invaded by aliens. The genie's cousins are killing people. They have outlawed Ahmadi Muslims as non-Muslims. They are forcibly converting Hindu girls to Islam and trapping Christians in blasphemy cases. A genocide is unfolding, as Shia Muslims are being hunted and murdered systematically. These murders are ideological; the killers are not found. The secular Jinnah is dead; the Islamist Jinnah is alive. Pakistan is irrecoverable as a state and has entered, to use noted historian Ayesha Jalal's words, a state of "cognitive disability".

# Pakistani Textbooks

## Teaching Jihad

This paper examines the role of school textbooks in promoting hate against religious minorities in Pakistan. On September 22, 2013, more than 80 Christians were killed and hundreds injured when two Taliban suicide bombers targeted worshippers as they were leaving after a Sunday service at the 130-year-old All Saints Church in Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Imran Khan, the leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party which governs the province, slammed the attackers but in the same breath asked: "Why do terrorist attacks occur when dialogue is on the table?" The insinuation was that foreign forces had planned the attack to sabotage Pakistan's peace negotiations with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Jundul Hafsa, a militant outfit which functions as part of the Hakimullah Mehsud-led TTP, claimed responsibility for the attack. Ahmad Marwat, the group's spokesman, said the following about Christians: "They are the enemies of Islam; therefore we target them.... We will continue our attacks on non-Muslims on Pakistani land." There are 200,000 Christians in the province and of them 70,000 live in Peshawar. Such hate against Christians is the result of decades of teaching in government-run schools across Pakistan.

In Pakistan, where Islamist groups launch regular attacks against non-Muslim Pakistanis like Christians and Hindus as well as against some sects of Muslims such as Shias and Ahmadi Muslims, whom they do not consider to be real Muslims, the official and unofficial media, government leaders and religious scholars have legitimised hate against religious minorities, with the term "minority" itself having come to be seen in a pejorative context. This hate is disseminated through school textbooks, government policies, and sermons in mosques and religious congregations. In September 2012, the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) released a paper by this author cataloguing Islamist

and jihadi attacks against minority groups and underlining the need to put Pakistan on international genocide watch.

After the September 22 church attack, senior Pakistani journalist Aamer Ahmed Khan commented in unequivocal terms on the Pakistani elite's silence in condemning such attacks on minorities: "This silence of our ruling elite is itself the real Talibanism." In Pakistan, the federal government and the provincial government headed by Imran Khan's party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are engaged in talks with the Taliban. Their ministers are publicly seen as silent in their criticism of jihadi groups and the TTP. In turn, the Taliban are emboldened. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the PTI-led government has recently been in the news for initiating policies to restore jihadi lessons in school textbooks which were removed as part of reforms by the previous government of the secular Awami National Party (ANP). "What kind of sovereignty, freedom, and Islamic values are these when Islamic teachings, jihad, and national heroes are removed from textbooks? Jihad is part of our faith. We will not back down (from our decision)," Shah Farman, the information minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, told reporters on August 21, 2013.

Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, hate speech against non-Muslims has been a normal phenomenon in Pakistani society. In August-September 2013, a branch of the Lahore Grammar School had to face the backlash of introducing a supplementary course titled "Comparative Religion", which was designed to "educate about Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism". A television channel played its part in inciting popular opinion against the school. According to a report, "The course received considerable backlash, gaining mainstream attention following an episode of a talk show aired on ARY News, Khara Sach, on September 16, 2013. In the episode, hosted by [television] anchor Mubasher Luqman, the school was falsely accused of attempting to convert students to other religions...."

### **The Seeds of Distortion**

In an article published by the *Dawn* newspaper earlier, journalist Maheen Usmani described how religious fundamentalism and state-sponsored obscurantist textbooks were creating a generation of literate Pakistani youth who identified themselves more with Islam than with Pakistan. In the article, titled "The Ideology of Thought Control in Pakistan", she observes:

"Let us consider a ubiquitous slogan about the 'ideology' of Pakistan. A staple of our school textbooks, it echoed in massive public

rallies as well as debates on secularism. '*Pakistan ka matlab kiya? La illaha il lallah*' (What is the meaning of Pakistan? There is no God but Allah) has become the rallying cry of the campaign to Islamise Pakistani society. Ironically, it is a slogan that was coined long after the creation of Pakistan, but it is now being falsely ascribed to the leaders of the Pakistan movement.... History textbooks written soon after Partition – a time when the grief of shattered families who experienced communal killings was at its peak – show a more liberal mindset. The history of the subcontinent was taken to start with the ancient Indus valley civilisations rather than with the conquest of India by the first Muslim invader, Mohammad bin Qasim, in 712....

"The seeds of the distortion of history and the preponderance of religious dogma which were sown decades ago are bearing fruit today. Examples from the curriculum designed by the Federal Ministry of Education abound. The Social Studies textbook for Class 7 says: 'European nations have been working during the past three centuries through conspiracies on naked aggression to subjugate the countries of the Muslim world.' 14-year-old students of Pakistan Studies are being taught: 'One of the reasons for the downfall of the Muslims in the subcontinent was the lack of the spirit of jihad.' 13-year-olds are instructed: 'In Islam, jihad is very important... The person who offers his life never dies.... All the prayers nurture one's passion of jihad.'

"The cause for the intolerance experienced by Ahmadis [i.e. Ahmadi Muslims, declared non-Muslims under Pakistani law], Hindus, and Christians lies in public education, structured as it has been to defend Pakistan against some phantom enemy. Non-Muslims are forced to read the same textbooks which contain derogatory remarks against Hindus, such as them being eternal enemies of Muslims. Our myopic educational system discourages questioning and causes ethnic and religious minorities to be viewed with suspicion...."

In addition to official school textbooks, there are thousands of unregulated madrassas (Islamic seminaries), whose curriculum is not discussed here, that teach their own Islamist and jihadi lessons, leading to hate campaigns against religious minorities in Pakistan. And many of these madrassas not only engender extremism among Pakistani youth but have also emerged as training grounds for terrorists. As late as August 2013, the United States imposed sanctions on the Ganj Madrassa in Peshawar for training and recruiting militants belonging to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a group blamed for the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. The head of the madrassa, Fazeelat-ul-Shaykh Abu Mohammed Ameen al-Peshawari aka Shaykh Aminullah, has been a



United Nations-designated terrorist since 2009 for his support for al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

### **The Subtle Subversion**

A landmark study of Pakistani school textbooks, "The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan" edited by A. H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim and published by the Islamabad-based Sustainable Development Policy Institute, reveals a worrying picture. The study examines in detail how school textbooks nurture Islamism and promote hate and jihad among students of primary schools. Even non-Muslim Pakistanis have to go through this daily school ordeal from early childhood. Highlights of the study are given below:

- i) The 2002 National Early Childhood Education Curriculum requires as an objective: "To nurture in children a sense of Islamic identity and pride in being Pakistani. There is no mention that this is to be done among Muslim students alone."
- ii) For Class 5 and 6 students, the Urdu curriculum requires that "A feeling be created among students that they are the members of a Muslim nation. Therefore, in accordance with the Islamic tradition, they have to be truthful, honest, patriotic and life-sacrificing mujahids (janbaz mujahid)"; and lays down the following objectives: "To educate and train the future generations of Pakistan as a true practicing Muslim"; "To develop a sense of pride in being Muslim and Pakistani"; and "Knows that national culture is not the local culture or local customs, but that it means the culture the principles of which are laid down by Islam."
- iii) A lesson on "Our Country" in the Class 2 Urdu book states: "Our country is Pakistan. We live in our country. Pakistan is an Islamic country. Here Muslims live. Muslims believe in the unity of Allah. They do good deeds...." A Class 6 book teaches: "Who am I? I am a Muslim. I am a Pakistani. I love my country and I love my people... You know that you are a Muslim and your religion is Islam."
- iv) The National Early Childhood Education Curriculum requires the teaching of the following "life skills" to both Muslim and non-Muslim children: "Use greetings such as Assalam-o-Alaikum [words of Islamic greeting]"; "Know when to say Bismillah [I begin in the name of Allah]"; "Recite the first Kalimah [words declaring belief in Islam] and understand its meaning"; "Name the five daily prayers"; and "Learn about Ramadan and Eidain [Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha]".

- v) The 1995 primary education curriculum requires both Muslim and non-Muslim children to "be proud of the Islamic way of life, and try to acquire and adopt Islamic teachings"; "try to adopt principles of Islamic way of living"; "participate in Salat ba Jamat [collective prayers] in mosques, to develop a sense of respect for Muezzin and Imam"; "read the Koran, and respect it"; "listen to the events from Islamic history and derive pleasure from them"; "try to adopt principles of Islamic way of living"; "respect for Islamic beliefs and practices"; "study religious books in order to understand Koranic teachings"; "respect Islamic or national customs and urge others to do the same"; "love Islamic traditions", etc.
- vi) Class 5 textbooks teach the following: "Events from the life of the Holy Prophet, His family and Islamic leaders"; "Stories of Imams and the Prophet's companions (sacrifice: from the life of Hazrat Usman [third caliph of Islam])"; "Stories about the Pakistan movement, eminent personalities of Pakistan, and martyrs of Pakistan"; "Simple stories to urge for jihad"; "Unity of the Islamic world", etc.
- vii) The following objectives of teaching Urdu are laid down for both Muslim and non-Muslim children: "To create love for religion and respect for personalities [of Islam and Pakistan]"; "must have belief in the unity of God, and know that Allah is the creator of the universe"; "Must regard Islamic ways as the best of all"; "Must have reverence for all the messengers of God, the Prophet Muhammad..., his family members, his companions, the imams and the leaders, and must try to know their teachings and adopt their ways"; "Must maintain affinity (love) with the Islamic world"; "Must respect the leaders, books, places of worship of other religions"; "Must be aware of the blessings of Jihad, and must create yearning for jihad in his heart."
- viii) The authors, A. H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim, observe: "The... disturbing part of this is to make the non-Muslim students read the Koran, not in Islamiyat [Islamic Studies] which they are not required to learn, but in the compulsory subject of Urdu. Urdu textbooks from Class I to III, which are compulsory for students of all faiths, contain lessons on learning to read the Koran. Progressing from Class I where Arabic alphabets are introduced in a lesson titled Iqra, to the lesson entitled 'E'rab' on punctuations in a Class II Urdu book, to the lessons in a Class III Urdu book entitled 'Koran Parhna' (reading the Koran), which has seven lessons (out of a total of 51) on learning to read the Koran. The non-Muslim students must learn these lessons and prepare them for examinations also."

- ix) The textbooks teach the following: "Hindu has always been an enemy of Islam"; "The religion of the Hindus did not teach them good things – Hindus did not respect women"; "Hindus worship in temples which are very narrow and dark places, where they worship idols. Only one person can enter the temple at a time"; "In our mosques, on the other hand, all Muslims can say their prayers together."
- x) The following chapters, learning outcomes and educational activities relating to jihad and *shahadat* (martyrdom) have been part of the Pakistani school curriculum before military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq ushered Pakistan on a bold jihadi path and it has continued after his term: "Recognize the importance of jihad in every sphere of life"; "Must be aware of the blessings of jihad, and must create yearning for jihad in his heart"; "Concept: Jihad; Affective objective: Aspiration for Jihad"; "Love and aspiration for Jihad, Tableegh (Proselytization), Jihad, Shahadat"; "To make speeches on Jihad and Shahadat"; "To make speeches on Jihad"; "Evaluation: To judge their spirits while making speeches on Jihad, Muslim History and Culture"; "Concepts: Jihad, Amar bil Maroof and Nahi Anil Munkar [promoting virtue and rejecting vice]"; "Importance of Jihad"; "Concepts of Ideology of Pakistan, Muslim Ummah and Jihad"; "Folk tales (mythical, moral, Islamic, travel and adventure, jihad)."

### **Fanatic Literacy?**

The National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), a non-governmental organisation that defends the rights of religious minorities in Pakistan, released a study in 2012 titled "Education or Fanatic Literacy?" It examined how Pakistani school textbooks viewed religions other than Islam "with contempt and prejudice". The study expressed concern over the teaching of Islamist content to non-Muslim students. Some of its concerns are excerpted below:

- "Islamic Studies is a compulsory subject for Muslim students in each class at school, college levels and [in] most of the Universities. A majority of non-Muslim students are also forced to take Islamic Studies due to fear of enhancing discrimination for themselves and other technical difficulties involved in taking the so-called option of Ethics."
- "The recent Education Policy (2009) also made 'Reading of Koranic Parts' (Nazira) a compulsory subject from grade 3 to 8, without giving a viable alternative to non-Muslim students."

- "The subjects other than Islamiyat [Islamic Studies], especially social studies and languages, have 20-40% of material on the subjects solely related to the religion of the majority."
- "Religions other than Islam, when mentioned, are dealt with contempt and biases. Educationists, intellectuals and civil society organizations have time and again identified lessons reflecting religious hatred and twisting history; this critique has been absolutely ignored. Hate materials and religious discriminations are still part of curricula in languages, social studies, geography and history...."
- "There are other religious discriminations in education policy; e.g. Every Hafiz-e-Quran is eligible for 20 extra marks for admissions and jobs at the Public Service Commission according to a Federal Cabinet decision dated 20-10-1992. Yet on March 8, 2012, the Punjab Assembly passed a unanimous resolution to make teaching the Holy Koran part of the curriculum."

### **Textbooks in Punjab Province**

Citing school textbooks published by the Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore, the NCJP study found that textbooks in the province promoted hate against religious minorities. Here is a sample of the components of the curriculum:

- In the Urdu book *Meri Kitab* (My Book) for Grade 3, children are taught the following: The British and Hindus were both against the independence of Pakistan (Page 57). In a lesson titled "Story of Minar-e-Pakistan" in *Meri Kitab* for Grade 4, children are taught that after the British left in 1947, Hindus would have imposed their religious laws and Muslims would have been discriminated against (Page 23).
- In Social Studies for Grade 5, children are taught the following: The creeds of Hindus and Muslims are totally different; Hindus never accepted the independence of Pakistan; Hindus are enemies of Islam; and Raja Hari Singh, the Hindu king of Kashmir, hatched conspiracies against Pakistan (Pages 2-5). A lesson titled "Muhammad bin Qasim" in the same book lauds the Muslim invader for converting Hindus to Islam (Page 77).
- In an Urdu book for Grade 5, a lesson on the Pakistan Resolution, which paved the way for the creation of Pakistan, mentions the following: Soon after the resolution was passed, the Hindus kicked up a row of hatred (Page 19). A lesson in the same book says:

A selfish Jew was the owner of a well and he never allowed Muslims to take water from it (Page 32); Do you like it that we remain under these infidels and our next generation lives as their slaves (Page 56).

- In an Urdu book for Grade 6, a lesson titled "King Saladdin Ayyubi" contains several references to "infidel/kafir" (Pages 30-32). A page in the same book shows a "map of barbarism" before the arrival of Islam (Page 15). In Social Studies for Grade 7, a lesson on the "Situation of Pre-Islamic Society" speaks of hatred against non-Islamic people (Pages 7-14). A lesson in Urdu for Grade 8 says that Hindus declared the independence of Pakistan the dream of an insane person, implying that it is a reference to Muhammad Ali Jinnah who led the movement for Pakistan (Page 58).

### **Textbooks in Sindh Province**

The NCJP examined a series school textbooks published by the Sindh Textbook Board, Jamshoro. A sample of the contents of the textbooks that promote hate against religious minorities, especially Hindus, are given below:

- In Urdu for Grade 6, children are taught the following: After the independence of Pakistan, fanatic Hindus [in India] started practising injustice and cruelty against Muslims (Page 22); a chapter on Sufi mystic Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh has it that non-Muslims started hating the Muslims (Page 45). The book on Social Studies for Grade 6 is littered with anti-Hindu hate (Pages 64-66, 75-76). A chapter on the history of the British in India accuses Christian missionaries of converting local people into Christianity (Page 85).
- In Social Studies for Grade 7, the word "Eesai" – a derogatory term for Christians – is used frequently instead of Masihee/Christian (Pages 12-14); a chapter on "the Muslim world and colonialism" castigates the Western and Christian governments for narrow-mindedness and fanaticism (Page 16); a lesson says that "to destroy the Muslims completely, they (the British) encouraged and supported the Hindus (Page 46); hate material runs throughout, especially on pages 47, 48 and 50.
- In Urdu for Grade 7, anti-Hindu teachings are common through pages 14-15 and 49-50. In a lesson on Pakistan's national poet Muhammad Iqbal, students are taught that before the creation of Pakistan, Hindus were violating the economic rights of Muslims and Hindus and also opposed the ideology of Muslims (Pages 49-50). In Social Studies for Grade 9-10, a lesson on the Completion of

Pakistan says that Hindus wanted to keep Muslims away from all walks of life in independent India because Muslims were aware of Hindus' selfish attitude (Page 22, 27 and 46).

- In Social Studies for Grade 8, children are taught that Hindus believed in the ideology that there is only one nation: Hindu (Page 97); in pre-divided India, the majority Hindus were a problem for Muslims (Page 97); "Hindu racists not only want to destroy the Muslims, but all the non-Hindu nations as well (Page 97)." Similar views are articulated in a lesson on the ideology of Pakistan (Pages 100 and 101).

### **Textbooks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provinces**

Hindus are the main targets because of the Two-Nation Theory, an underlying principle that Hindus and Muslims are two nations and therefore cannot live together. This thinking became the foundation of the Pakistan movement, leading to the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Hate against Hindus and other non-Muslim religious groups in Pakistan is reflected in the textbooks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces too. The following is a sample of such contents found by the NCJP study in textbooks published by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board, Peshawar:

- In Social Studies for Class 5, children are taught that the Hindus did not cooperate with Muslims; they were against the Muslims and wanted them to leave the subcontinent (Page 5-6); and if the subcontinent remained as one state, the Hindus would have introduced law and policies that served their interest. In this case the Muslims would have had to survive under the Hindus forever (Page 7-8); and that India continued enmity against Pakistan (Page 11). In Urdu for Grade 6, a chapter on the Organisation of Islamic Conference notes: On August 21, 1969, Israelis tried to set the Aqsa mosque on fire in occupied Baitul Muqadas (Page 76). In Urdu for Grade 8, an entire chapter refers to Christians by the derogatory term "Eesai" (Pages 51-55).
- In Social Studies for Grade 7, there are numerous derogatory references to Christians in a lesson on British-era colonialism in India (Page 16) and against Hindus (Pages 49-50). In Social Studies for Grade 8, a lesson on the ideology of Pakistan notes how racist Hindus want to destroy not only the Muslim but all the nations other than Hindus (Page 92); and Christian pastors are blamed for organising seminars and delivering speeches against

other religions (Page 93). Pejorative terms are used to refer to Christians (Page 94); and Hindus are accused of aiming to finish all Muslims (Page 104).

Sample text from the NCJP study of textbooks published by the Balochistan Textbook Board, Quetta:

- In Social Studies for Grade 8, a lesson on the ideology of Pakistan says that: "Hindu racists" want to destroy Muslims as well as other nations (Pages 103-104); every Hindu violated the rights of Muslims (Page 115); and Hindus have habitually deceived Muslims. Similar anti-Hindu references run throughout the book (Pages 107-109, 111-112, 115-116). A lesson on the existence of Pakistan notes: Hindus and Sikhs started large-scale bloodshed against Muslims (Page 119).
- In Urdu for Grade 9, a lesson notes: "At one end there were frequent attacks by Christian missionaries against Islam"; Christian missionaries found it "easy and result-oriented" to target Islam and some missionaries thought that if they could defeat Muslims, there would be no other religion that could take a position against them (Page 16). In Urdu for Grade 10, students are taught that infidel practices began in the country because of the interference of Hindus in politics (Page 15); Hindus conspired to hurt Muslims and Hindus converted Muslims (Page 16); Hindus did not like the decision of the existence of Pakistan and opposed its creation (Page 17), and so on.

# Pakistan's Jewish Problem

**T**his paper examines a) the history of Jews in Pakistan; b) violence against Jews and their synagogues following the creation of the Islamic nation of Pakistan in 1947; c) contemporary protests by Pakistani Muslims against Jews and Israel; and d) Pakistani political and religious leaders' penchant for blaming most problems facing Pakistan on a United States-India-Israel axis.

Looking at Pakistani media reports over the past few years, this paper outlines how Pakistani opinion makers – barring a small segment of the liberal intelligentsia – are deepening the anti-Jewish mindset that is typical across the Islamic world. For the purposes of this analysis, this paper does not include statements, protests, editorials, cartoons or viewpoints of Pakistani leaders and the government which are deemed to be justified criticism of Israel over its policies regarding the Palestinian problem and the occupied territories.

This paper does discuss the narrative of antisemitism in Pakistani society, examining how Israel is seen by Islamic scholars and political leaders in Pakistan as representing the Jews rather than the state and government of Israel in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In the context of this paper, the definition of antisemitism the political/religious/cultural attacks on Jews and Israel that are not related to the Palestinian problem but over supposed Jewish-Israeli involvement in international conspiracies.

## The Jews and Pakistan

There is a long-held view that the Pashtun tribes, who inhabit the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, are one of the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Navraas Aafreedi, a Pashtun academic at Lucknow University in India's Uttar Pradesh state, told a newspaper in January 2010: "Pathans, or Pashtuns, are the only people in the world whose probable descent



from the lost tribes of Israel finds mention in a number of texts from the 10th century to the present day, written by Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars alike, both religious as well as secularists." However, attempts by anthropologists to establish a definitive Jewish link to the Pashtun tribes have been unsuccessful.

Nevertheless, historical records indicate that Jews, with no connection to the Pashtuns, have lived in Pakistan and the wider South Asian region over the past several centuries. A 2007 report in the Pakistani daily *Dawn* noted: "The earliest graves... [of Jews in Karachi] are from 1812 and 1814, with a vast majority from the 1950s." The report also cited Aitken's *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*, a British-era government document which was published from Karachi in 1907, as recording that "there were only 428 Jews enumerated in the census of 1901, and these were really all in Karachi. Many belonged to the Bene Israel community who observed Sephardic Jewish rites and are believed to have settled in India [which included Pakistan] shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus [the Roman Emperor in 69 AD]."

The *Dawn* report added: "Other research documents record about 2,500 Jews in Karachi, with about 100 in Peshawar at the beginning of the 20th century. At the time of [Pakistan's] independence [in 1947], many Jews migrated to India, but about 2,000 stayed in Pakistan. Their first real exodus occurred soon after the creation of Israel, which triggered many incidents of violence against Jews, and the Karachi synagogue became a site of anti-Israel demonstrations."

In the late 19th century, one of Karachi's notables was Soloman David, who died in March 1902. He was a surveyor of the Karachi municipality and built the Magain Shalom synagogue in Karachi. His gravestone reads: "The widely known and highly respected Soloman David always sought the welfare of the Jewish community and through his liberality erected at his own expense a handsome synagogue, Magain Shalome [sic]."

Another report estimated the Jewish population of Karachi at 2,500 prior to August 14-15, 1947, when Pakistan was created.

After Pakistan's creation as an Islamic nation, relations between the Jews and their Muslim neighbours began to deteriorate. This strain in Jewish-Muslim relations also resulted from Muslim protests in Pakistan against the newly created state of Israel. Some Pakistani Jews migrated to India and the United Kingdom, and others to Israel. In early 2010, a Pakistani daily carried this first-person observation of anti-Jewish violence in the newly created Islamic nation of Pakistan: "The synagogue in Karachi was set on fire, and several Jews were attacked.

The frequency of attacks increased after each of the Arab-Israeli wars, i.e. 1948, 1956 and 1967."

In 2008, a Karachi resident reminisced about the Jews of Karachi in a conversation with Pakistani journalist Syed Intikhab Ali: "[The Jews] were peaceful people having limited relations with local people and used to keep a distance from political activities. When [the] Arab-Israel war broke out in late sixties, they were isolated and started migrating silently and only a few Jewish people [were] left in the city."

From various accounts, it appears that some Jews might be living in Pakistan even now, possibly by hiding their religious identity lest it may not be possible for them to move to Israel as there are no diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Although there is no notable Jewish presence in Pakistan now, the anti-Jewish and anti-Israel protests in Pakistan have taken on an ideological nature, with religious and political leaders blaming Jews/Israel, Christians/the West/US, and Hindus/India as the cause of almost all of their problems. By 2010, it could be said that not a week had passed in Pakistan without a religious leader, a columnist, or a politician issuing a statement against Israel and the Jewish people, blaming them as well as the US and India for one or another of the problems facing Pakistan. Although not all criticism of Israel can be described as antisemitic, it seems that Pakistani leaders in their own minds do not see the subtle differences between their hateful ideological sloganeering against Jews and the possibly justified criticism of Israel's policies.

### **Characteristics of Antisemitism in Pakistan**

Young people of Pakistan are taught by the influential Urdu-language press that all major problems facing the society and state of Pakistan are created by Israel, the US and India – or Jews, Christians and Hindus respectively. Such thinking originates from a deep-rooted antisemitism that has become part of the collective conviction in the Islamic world in contemporary times and which has become solidly rooted in the Pakistani public consciousness.

With India strengthening its ties with Israel since the mid-1990s and the US enhancing its relations with India rapidly in recent years, Pakistani religious leaders see a tripartite "alliance" that threatens the Pakistani state and its Islamic identity. Such an ideological pattern informs the conspiracy-theory narrative that runs through the collective Pakistani psyche and public debate in Pakistan.

### Three Satans – India, the US and Israel

India, the US and Israel are seen in Pakistani public consciousness as three Satans acting against the Islamic nuclear state of Pakistan. The following will illustrate how opinion makers in Pakistan have been making a sustained ideological campaign against the three countries.

In 2009, Liaqat Baloch, secretary-general of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, the country's largest religious-political party and a mobiliser of mass public opinion, accused India, Israel and the US of pursuing "a single agenda" against Pakistan, stating: "The US, Israel and India are pursuing a single agenda [of weakening Pakistan]. The US aims to weaken Pakistan on the economic and military fronts, while India wants to weaken Pakistan internally." Syed Munawwar Hassan, the emir of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, criticised the Pakistani Army operations against the Taliban, arguing that Pakistan faced threats not from the militants but from the "three enemies, in the form of the US, Israel and India, which are the centre of evils".

In July 2010, the Taliban suicide bombers, who enjoy theological support from Deobandi clerics, struck at the shrine of 11th century Sufi mystic Syed Ali Hajveri in Lahore. The Sufi shrines in South Asia get their theological justification from Barelvi clerics, a school of Sunni Islam disapproved of by Deobandi clerics. Soon after the attack, clerics of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan accused "US Marines, Jews, and Blackwater" (the private US security firm now known as Xe Worldwide Services) of planning and executing the bombing. Syed Munawwar Hasan said that the Pakistani government was accusing religious organisations of attacking the shrine in order to divert public attention from the US' role in the shrine bombing, and added: "No Muslim can do what happened in the tomb of Data Sahab [aka Syed Ali Hajveri]. American Marines and Blackwater are responsible for it." Former Jamaat-e-Islami emir Qazi Hussain Ahmed claimed that India and Israel were involved in the bombings. "[Indian intelligence] RAW and [Israel's] Mossad are responsible for attacks on the tombs of Sufi mystics. They want to spread sectarian strife in Pakistan," he said.

Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, secretary general of the religious organisation Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, blamed India, American agents such as Blackwater, and Jews for the terror attacks in Pakistan, stating: "Blaming the Taliban for every terrorist activity serves the purpose of the United States. The fact that Blackwater and Jewish elements are involved in terrorism gets ignored. It's not that the Taliban are not involved – yet blaming them for everything is not right."

A few weeks before the July 2010 Lahore shrine bombing, Hafiz Ibtisam Elahi Zaheer, general secretary of the puritan Islamic group Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith, accused India and Israel of fomenting terrorism in Pakistan. "The government of Pakistan needs to check the involvement of India and Israel in the current stream of terror attacks in Pakistan. India and Israel... are patronising the terrorist activities in Pakistan," he said.

The Lahore shrine bombing led to the emergence of an anti-Deobandi, anti-Taliban alliance called the Sunni Ittehad Council, which pressed ahead with its demand that the government act against Sunni militant organisations. To counter this group led by Bareilvi clerics, the rival Deobandi scholars organised a conference in the first week of July at the Jamia Naeemia madrassa of Karachi, where a prominent cleric, Mufti Mohammad Naeem, slammed the terrorists for attacking the shrine but in the same breath criticised the Sunni Ittehad Council for demanding action against pro-militant religious organisations as well as the Tablighi Jamaat's congregations. Speaking at a press conference, Mufti Mohammad Naeem said: "The demand for a ban on Tablighi congregations by the Sunni Ittehad Council is like reiterating demands by the Jews and Christians. The demands for a ban on Lashkar-e-Taiba and Tablighi Jamaat are being put forward at the behest of India and other anti-Islam forces." Tablighi Jamaat is a revivalist Islamic movement while Lashkar-e-Taiba is a jihadist organisation, and both have their bases in Muridke near Lahore.

In October 2010, a joint statement on the issue of the emerging Deobandi-Bareilvi dispute was signed by clerics of various Islamic schools. Among them were Maulana Abdul Malik, the emir of Jamiat-e-Ittehadul Ulema Pakistan (JIUP); Maulana Abdur Rauf Malik, the chief of Muttahida Ulema Council; JIUP secretary general Allama Ghulam Rasool Rashidi and his deputy Maulana Abdul Jalil Naqshbandi; JIUP's Punjab chief Maulana Ataur Rehman; and Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali and Hafiz Muhammad Idrees of Idara Ma'raf-e-Islami Mansoorah. The statement expressed concern that "a conspiracy is being implemented by the US-India-Israel troika to cause Deobandi-Bareilvi clashes to further divide and weaken the Muslim ummah".

Addressing young students on the 23rd day of an ideological summer school in Lahore in July 2009, Majeed Nizami, editor-in-chief of the influential Urdu-language *Roznama Nawa-i-Waqt*, stated: "The trinity of satanic alliance [US, Israel and India] is opposed to Pakistan...." This is one point on which Nizami has consistently

campaigned to create mass public opinion, especially among young students from schools across Pakistan. In October 2010, Nizami stated that the "real target" of the US-led war on terror was Pakistan: "The US has currently launched a Crusade against the world of Islam.... Instead of ending the drone attacks [in Pakistan], the US has increased them. It will not desist until we reply to them [i.e. to the drone attacks]." He also accused India of being on a mission to "undo Pakistan". Nizami has regularly described India, the US and Israel as "three Satans" out to destroy Pakistan.

In mid-2009, Colonel Imam, a prominent and widely interviewed former Pakistani spy who is credited for raising the Taliban and whose real name is Amir Sultan, while speaking about the US military operation in Afghanistan's Helmand province, stated that six intelligence international agencies were active against the state of Pakistan, though he named only three – the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of India, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Israel's Mossad – and alleged that Mossad had opened an office in Kabul to eliminate Pakistan.

Over the past few years, the Jang Group, the largest media conglomerate in Pakistan, has carried out a concerted campaign to unseat the elected government of President Asif Zardari. Late in 2009, several senior journalists writing in the Urdu-language daily *Roznama Jang* were dubbed "Israeli agents" by Gul Muhammad Jakhrani, a lawmaker of the ruling Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Jakhrani said: "[Journalists] Kamran Khan, Shaheen Sehbai, Shahid Masood, Ansar Abbasi and Saleh Zaffir are Israeli agents and they were assigned the task of creating instability in Pakistan and pitting the institutions of the country against one another so that the Israeli desire to keep Pakistan unstable might be fulfilled." It can be said that the lawmaker was probably not serious about his statement that these journalists are Israeli agents; nevertheless, his statement illustrates how Pakistani leaders blame Jews and Israel for every issue that is not even remotely connected to Jews.

### **Antisemitism Used Instrumentally by Pakistani Army**

Such conspiracy theories against Jews and Israel have also penetrated the Pakistani military establishment, which is strengthened by the day-to-day arguments forwarded by a large number of Pakistani religious organisations. In early 2009, Pakistan's secular leaders signed a sharia-for-peace deal with Taliban leader Maulana Fazlullah; soon

after the deal, the Taliban imposed a total ban on girls' education in Swat district. Later, an international outcry against the Taliban forced Pakistan to carry out a military operation in Swat, leading to the arrest of hundreds of militants and the seizure of arms and ammunition.

The Urdu-language daily *Roznama Express* alleged in a report that Pakistani "security officials have also confirmed that the weapons seized [from militants in Swat] were Russian-, Indian- and US-made, while Israel provided them modern technology. Evidences have also been secured regarding the use of such technology in the installation of FM radio by Maulana Fazlullah." The reference to the FM radio is about a radio channel run by Maulana Fazlullah to advocate his mission of jihad and the need to enforce Islamic sharia in Pakistan.

In June 2009, *Roznama Jang* quoted senior Pakistani military and national security officials as saying that there was "irrefutable evidence" that Israel and India were fomenting trouble in Pakistan's Balochistan and Waziristan region. The military and security officials were unidentified in the report, as is the norm. Another report in the *Roznama Express* alleged that there was evidence that Taliban commanders Maulana Fazlullah and Baitullah Mehsud (who was killed later in August 2009) conducted meetings with officials of RAW.

Throughout 2010, the Pakistan Army was under pressure from the US to carry out a military operation in North Waziristan, a safe haven for terrorists belonging to the Taliban, the Haqqani Network and al-Qaeda. In early 2010, the Pakistan Army dropped pamphlets in North Waziristan, linking the Taliban with Israel, India and al-Qaeda. According to a report in the Lahore-based newspaper *Daily Times*, the pamphlet gave a detailed account of how the Taliban derived power from their connections with "[the] anti-Islamic (Indian) RAW and (the Israeli) Mossad intelligence agencies and Indian consulates in Afghanistan."

Urging the tribes to support the government, the two-page pamphlet "informed the tribal people about the Taliban's source of income, which is mainly generated from drug smugglers and 'contacts' (India and Israel)." According to another report in *The News* daily, the pamphlet, titled "Correct Decision and First Step Towards Right Direction", accused the Taliban of acquiring funds from India, Israel and al-Qaeda to buy heavy weapons and brainwash innocent youth.

Earlier, in October 2009, when the Pakistan Army launched an operation against the Taliban in South Waziristan, former Jamaat-e-

Islami chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed described the military offensive to be the "result of an Indian and Israeli conspiracy to create distance between jihadi organisations and the Pakistan Army." He also said that the "tribesmen" – a reference to Taliban militants belonging to the Mehsud tribe – of South Waziristan who were considered the Pakistan Army's hands and who the US and India were afraid of were now being pitched against the Pakistan Army.

### **Antisemitism Used to Designate Threats**

Pakistan has seen a wave of suicide attacks in recent years. There is a trend of explaining such threats to Pakistan as emanating from outside Pakistan. For example, Pakistani leaders generally accuse the Taliban militants of being agents of the US, India and Israel.

In November 2009, a Peshawar-based daily, *The Post*, cited what it called "reliable sources" as saying that India and Israel had in 2008 agreed on a plan "to start a deadly episode from July 2009 in which regular suicide attacks will be a permanent feature in Pakistan, and no one knows how long this episode will take". The newspaper accused the two countries of setting up what it called the Indo-Israel Intelligence (Triple III) agency to carry out this plan, adding: "The trained commandos of the said agency have been given the tasks to attack security forces, foreign donor agencies offices, communication lines and public places [in Pakistan]... Sources also disclosed that the Mumbai terrorist attack [of November 2008] was actually a conspiracy against Pakistan, planned by the Triple III Agency, to defame Pakistan."

In December 2009, lawyers belonging to the Islamabad Bar Association did not attend court proceedings in protest against what they called "the unreasonable interference of the US in Pakistan and the presence of Blackwater (Xe) in the country". Riasat Ali Azad, general secretary of the Islamabad Bar Association, told protesters at a public rally, "Besides the Taliban, Blackwater is also involved in the current incidents of terrorism in the country. Blackwater, Mossad and RAW have teamed up against Pakistan and are supporting miscreants to destabilise our country."

Addressing a meeting in Sialkot town of Punjab province in April 2010, Syed Salahuddin, chairman of the Muttahida Jihad Council, an alliance of jihadi organisations, accused the Zardari government of describing "heroes of jihad" as terrorists. "Declaring heroes [of jihad] as terrorists is the worst dishonesty this government could do with history under the pressure of Jews and Hindus," he said.

General Mirza Aslam Baig, former Pakistan Army chief, accused Indian, US and Israeli secret agencies of supporting the militant organisation Jundallah – a Sunni militant organisation formed by two Pakistani military officers and which has carried out attacks against Shia Muslims in Iran and Pakistan. General Baig said, "The Indian secret agency RAW, the CIA, and Israel's Mossad are supporting Jundallah. Unfortunately, all this is being carried out from [the Jundallah base in] Balochistan."

In March 2010, Professor Sajid Mir, the emir of the Jamiat Ahle Hadith, said that the US, India and Israel were carrying out acts of terrorism in Pakistan and that the Pakistani rulers were wrongly holding the Taliban responsible for terrorism. He stated: "The policy to put terrorism on the account of the Taliban is baseless and has failed, and needs to be reviewed." Syed Munawwar Hasan accused India of sending suicide bombers into Pakistan, stating: "India is engaged in destabilising Pakistan under Israeli and US patronage.... India is engaged in hatching conspiracies against the ideological and geographical borders of Pakistan and is creating unrest in the country.... India is sending suicide bombers to our country and is also involved in terrorism [in Balochistan]."

In mid-2009, Sahibzada Abul Khair Muhammad Zubair, the chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, criticised the Taliban for attacks on Sufi shrines in Pakistan, describing the militants as agents of Jews and Christians. According to a report in the Urdu-language newspaper *Roznama Jasarat*, Zubair said that the Taliban attacks were part of a conspiracy aimed at creating sectarian conflict in Pakistan, calling for confronting the "agents of Jews and Christians who are attacking the shrines of Sufis (mystics) and are killing the Sunni scholars and mystics".

At a Defence of Pakistan conference in Lahore in June 2009, several clerics, including Dr. Sarfraz Naeemi (who later that month was killed by a Taliban suicide bomber) and Pir Sajid-ur-Rehman, asked the Pakistani government to stop fighting in the US-led war on terror and "instead to wage the war to save Pakistan from external and internal enemies, by cutting off the Taliban's supply line of funds from US, India, Israel, UAE, and Saudi Arabia". Pir Sajid-ur-Rehman, who called for the enforcement of Nizam-e-Mustafa (the rule of the Prophet) in Pakistan, also accused Washington and New Delhi of running over 50 training centres in Pakistan's tribal areas to prepare Taliban fighters and suicide bombers.



### Motifs Used in Antisemitic Attacks

The antisemitic thinking of Pakistani leaders spills over into many issues, from sports, the polio vaccination campaign, the Pakistan-India water dispute, Valentine's Day and April's Fool Day to the United Nations, the Taliban, Islam, and many more. Some, given below, illustrate the extensive scale of antisemitism in Pakistan.

In August 2010, Pakistani cricketers were allegedly involved in match-fixing in England, which was revealed in a sting operation by the British tabloid *News of the World*. Although the cricket scandal was not even distantly linked to Israel or to Jews, the Urdu-language Pakistani newspaper *Roznama Khabrain* carried a report alleging that "Indian and Jewish lobbies" in the UK were responsible for trapping the Pakistani cricket team in order to defame Pakistan and to get rising Pakistani cricketers banned from international cricket.

The *Roznama Khabrain* report also stated that Jews, through the Indian lobby and Indian bookmakers, paid cash to the match-fixers who had Indian wives.

In October 2009, *Mahnama Banat-e-Aisha*, an Urdu-language monthly magazine which is part of the Haftroza Al-Qalam group of publications belonging to the militant group Jaish-e-Muhammad, alleged that the international polio eradication campaign was a "dangerous Jewish conspiracy". The article, "Polio: Disease or Dangerous Jewish Conspiracy," read in part:

"The Jews, who dream of ruling the world, have invented different types of vaccines, drugs, and injections in an organised way to weaken Muslims in their beliefs on spiritual, practical, and moral levels, and make their bodies contaminated.

"The oral polio vaccine campaign is being run under a worldwide conspiracy – except in the Zionist countries. Its total focus is now on South Asian countries – India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The US has already marked this area as an extremely strategic region...."

"Have we ever thought why these greedy Jews and Christians are spending millions of dollars on this campaign...? An analysis of how the polio vaccination is prepared is sufficient in order to understand how the viruses of *haram* [forbidden] and unpius animals... are being injected into our [Muslim] bodies...."

The dispute between India and Pakistan over the issue of sharing the waters of the rivers that flow from India into Pakistani territory is a purely bilateral matter between the two neighbours. Nevertheless, while articulating their grievances against India, Pakistani leaders make it a point to drag Jews and Israel into the dispute.

In October 2008, Majeed Nizami, editor-in-chief of *Roznama Nawa-i-Waqt*, wrote an article about the water dispute in which he also described Israel, the US and India as "three Satans" – accusing them of being united against "nuclear-capable Pakistan" and warning: "If, in order to resolve our [water and other] problems, we have to wage a nuclear war with India, we will."

At a seminar on the water issue held by the Nazaria-e-Pakistan Trust in April 2008, Lt.-Gen. Hamid Gul, the former chief of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), spoke about the water issue but also added: "Two states came into existence in 1947 and 1948: one, Pakistan; two, Israel. The two are threats to each other. Ultimately, only one of them will survive.... Pakistan can be saved by making a role model of the Prophet [Muhammad]."

The former ISI chief also alluded to Samuel P. Huntington's clash-of-civilisations thesis, stating: "At this point, the matter is not of a war between civilisations, but that of a clash between systems. Islam is a humanity-loving religion. The West is fighting the last battle for its survival."

Hafiz Zahoorel Hassan Dahir, a prominent anti-India Pakistani activist who works with Hamid Gul and Majeed Nizami, has repeatedly argued the following point about the water dispute: "With the cooperation of the Jewish lobby, India has opened a battlefield of a water war aimed at making Pakistan's fertile lands barren."

In 2008, the British government expressed support for India's bid for the permanent membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC). This move was declared by Raja Basharat Khan, convener of the Jamaat-e-Islami (South Zone-UK), to be a result of the West's "enmity with Islam", and warned that if India became a permanent UNSC member, there would be a new campaign against the interests of Pakistan and other Islamic nations. Islamic clerics of Pakistani origin in the UK such as Raja Basharat Khan and those visiting regularly from Pakistan make similar allegations routinely.

In November 2010, when US President Barack Obama expressed support for India's bid for permanent UNSC membership, former Pakistan Army Chief General (retired) Mirza Aslam Baig criticised Obama "After India, the US will make Israel a member of the Security Council," he said.

In June 2010, when the UNSC approved a new set of sanctions on Iran, Lt.-Gen. Hamid Gul said that the move was part of a plot hatched by the US and Israel against Islam and Iran. Gul added: "The US and the Zionist regime (of Israel) are plotting against Islam, and Iran in

particular.... The enemies of Islam do not know that Iran's nation and government will stand against these sanctions as they stood up to the previous sanctions...."

Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Munawwar Hasan commented on the UN sanctions on Iran, stating that they had been "clamped [due to] the plea that Tehran was continuing its nuclear programme despite UN warnings and was not cooperating with the world body – a complaint levelled against Tel Aviv with higher intensity.... The Zionists and the Hindus are united against the Muslims, but the Muslim rulers are acting as US stooges.... Israel also rejected the UN resolutions on Palestine, but no sanctions were imposed on it."

Speaking on the issue of Israel's May 2010 commando action against the Gaza flotilla, Mian Mehboob Ahmed, retired chief justice of Pakistan's Federal Shariat Court, said a month later: "Muslim countries should quit the United Nations Organisation (UNO) and strengthen the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) to contest the conspiracies by the Jews and the Christians." The former chief justice went on to describe the UN as "an extension of the power of Jews and nothing else".

In Pakistani consciousness, nurtured by religious organisations over the past six decades, Pakistan is an Islamic nation, leading the likely emergence of a global Islamic caliphate. Dr. Rafiq Ahmed, a right-wing thinker and motivational speaker, said in June 2010 that Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, was not secular, and described the Pakistan movement that had led to the creation of the country as an Islamic movement. Addressing a congregation of madrasa students in Lahore, Ahmed said, "The Pakistan movement was an Islamic movement which aimed at establishing and reviving the caliphate after achieving a separate state for Muslims."

Issues relating to Pakistanis abroad as well as to Islam are also explained in Pakistan in terms of antisemitic references, as Pakistan is viewed as a defender of Islamic interests internationally.

UK Prime Minister David Cameron appointed Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, who is of Pakistani origin, as the chair of his Conservative Party. Warsi's rise to prominence in British politics has been celebrated in Pakistan. In 2010, Warsi was barred by her party from attending an Islamist conference in London. The Global Peace and Unity conference was organised by an Islam television channel which has been accused of promoting Islamic extremism. The Urdu-language daily *Roznama Nawa-i-Waqt* published a report stating that the "Jewish lobby" played a key role in stopping Warsi from taking part in the Islamic conference. The report alleged that UK Home Secretary Theresa May and her

adviser Nick Timothy acted at the behest of the Jewish lobby in Britain to stop Warsi from taking part in the event, stating that May had told Warsi that she could not attend the conference. According to the report, when Warsi told her that she could not stop her, May contacted her superiors in the Conservative Party and used her influence to stop Warsi.

The report added that the UK's denial of a visa to former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed to attend the same conference came at the behest of the Jewish lobby.

In February 2010, there was a row in India over a newspaper's publication of a sketch of Jesus Christ. It provoked a strong reaction in Pakistan, where Islamic clerics, speaking at an event organised by the Muhammadia Students, a pro-jihadist youth group, alleged an "Israeli hand" in the publication of the "blasphemous" sketch of Jesus and urged the Indian government to take action against such "an old habit of infidels".

In mid-May 2010, Mohammad Hussain Mehnati, a Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan cleric, addressing a meeting of religious leaders in Karachi soon after attending the funeral ceremony of a Jamaat-e-Islami militant who was killed in Indian Kashmir, said: "The majority of the Kashmiri population wants annexation of Kashmir with Pakistan, but India, with the consent of the US and Israel, is forcefully depriving them of their right to self-determination. The Muslim ummah is facing the wrath of Allah for it has distanced itself from jihad. Jamaat-e-Islami supported jihad and the mujahideen yesterday and will always support them." Maulana Javaid Kasoori, a senior militant commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen, was among those present at the meeting.

Pakistani leaders use almost every occasion to talk negatively about Israel, the US and India. While some religious leaders can be credited for terming events like Valentine's Day and April Fools' Day in purely scholarly terms as *bid'a* (innovation in Islam) and therefore lacking sanction in Islam, a large number of them target Jews, Hindus and Christians in their public speeches.

In February 2008, Samia Raheel Qazi, the daughter of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Qazi Hussein Ahmed, described Valentine's Day as an irreligious event and criticised the Pakistani media for presenting it in a positive light. In the same breath, she added: "Jews and Hindus have specially designed this occasion in order to weaken the beliefs and traditions of Muslims."

Any event that might have originated in the West is seen by Pakistani leaders as anti-Islam and therefore as anti-Pakistan.

Prominent Pakistani cleric Allama Qazi Ahmad Noorani Siddiqui, a leader of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, stated in 2010 that events like April Fools' Day or Valentine's Day are *bid'ah* (innovation or digression), blind imitations of the West, and have no connection to Islam. He noted that April Fools' Day marks the large-scale killings of Muslims in Islamic Granada (Spain) on April 1, 1492, by the armies of Christian ruler Ferdinand II and the defeat of Muslims in Spain.

Ahmadi Muslims, whom Islamic clerics accuse of not believing that the Prophet Muhammad is God's final prophet, have been declared to be non-Muslims in Pakistan. They are barred from calling themselves Muslims, and from using Islamic symbols or calling their places of worship mosques. They are simply called Ahmadis, even by fair-minded Pakistani nationals, due to legal reasons, or pejoratively dismissed as Qadianis, after the Indian town of Qadian where the Ahmadiyya movement began in the late 19th century.

*Haftroza Al-Qalam*, an Urdu-language weekly published by the jihadist organisation Jaish-e-Muhammad, published an article accusing "the US, Israel and India" of trying to divide Pakistan into pieces. The article alleged that India had sent 10,000 troops to Afghanistan, adding: "The US and NATO forces based in Afghanistan have also deployed 40,000 personnel along Pakistan's border.... The US also plans to establish a Qadiani state, consisting of Kashmir and northern areas; Greater Pashtunistan; Greater Balochistan; Punjab; and Karachi Free Port."

Maulana Allahyar Arshad, the leader of the International Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Khatm-e-Nabuwwat, an anti-Ahmadi Muslim movement, accused Qadianis (Ahmadi Muslims) of utilising their pilgrimages to Qadian in India to connect with Israeli spy agencies and Israeli Qadianis, and said: "The Qadianis are spying on Pakistan and reveal Pakistani secrets during their visit to Qadian for pilgrimage.... The Qadianis were traitors yesterday and are so also today; trusting them means playing with the stability of Pakistan."

In March 2010, Liaqat Baloch, general secretary of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, accused Ahmadi Muslims and the Israeli Mossad of trying to jointly destabilise religious institutions. "Anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan forces want to destabilise religious institutions by igniting violence between the Deobandi and Barelvi [sects of Sunni Islam]. The Mossad and Qadiani lobby are involved in this wicked conspiracy....," he said.

In April 2010, Islamic clerics from the International Khatm-e-Nabuwwat Movement, which campaigns against Ahmadi Muslims,

accused the "Qadiani lobby" of engaging in activities to eliminate Islam from Pakistan. "Qadianis have always been trying to achieve the status in Pakistan that Jews have in America," said a statement made at a conference in Lahore where Maulana Abdul Hafeez Makki, a leading cleric of the anti-Ahmadi Muslims movement, was among the speakers.

In early 2009, a video emerged showing Pakistani Taliban militants flogging a girl in Pakistan's Swat district, as she lay sobbing in pain. There has been some debate in Pakistan about the authenticity of the video.

Senator Azam Khan Swati, Pakistan's US-educated science and technology minister, blamed the Jews for the video, stating: "The flogging of the 17-year-old girl in Swat was a Jewish conspiracy aimed at destroying peace in Swat and [at] distorting the image of Islamists who sport beards and wear turbans."

### **More Motifs Used in Antisemitic Attacks**

In 2010, the social networking site Facebook was the focus of an international controversy, after one of its millions of users launched a Draw Muhammad Day page asking people to post sketches of the Prophet Muhammad. Facebook was condemned widely in Pakistan and was, along with YouTube and hundreds of other websites, blocked by the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) for publishing content blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad. However, the PTA did not block any of the numerous websites of Pakistani religious organisations that publish hateful materials.

Maulana Ilyas Chinioti, a prominent Pakistani cleric from the International Khatm-e-Nabuwat Movement, which campaigns to enforce the Islamic doctrinal principle that the Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet of God, commented on the Facebook campaign, urging Muslims worldwide to boycott all products marketed or made by companies that were owned by Jews.

Addressing a public protest meeting against Facebook, Chinioti blamed the Jews for organising the drawing contest and said: "We will foil all conspiracies against the sanctity of the Prophet; and I have submitted a proposition to condemn this shameful act in the Punjab legislative assembly.... I appeal to all the Muslims to stop buying products made by Jews. They earn from us and spend the money on heretic activities against our religion. We are indirectly supporting them in heresy by paying thousands of dollars to them daily."

In July 2010, a report in the pro-Taliban Urdu-language daily *Roznama Islam* described Facebook as anti-Islam, noting that it was

owned by a Zionist Jew, and that Israel was using Facebook to recruit spies from Muslim countries, and that after collecting information about people from the website, they were trapped or blackmailed into spying for Israel.

Over the past few years, there has been an ongoing international concern over the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons amid the Taliban terror attacks. Pakistani leaders think that there is an international game plan to destroy the Islamic nuclear identity of Pakistan.

In November 2009, in the town of Wana, the headquarters of Pakistan's tribal district of South Waziristan, Pakistani tribesmen held a protest rally against a report in the US magazine *The New Yorker* that Pakistan and the US were in talks about ways to secure Pakistan's nuclear weapons. According to a report in the Pashtu-language newspaper *Wrazpanra Wahdat*, thousands of weapons-brandishing tribesmen took part in a jirga, a meeting of tribal elders, which passed a resolution stating: "Pakistan's nuclear command and control system is active. Patriotic tribesmen are always ready for the defence of the motherland." The same resolution inserted an argument about Israel, asking the Afghan government to stop international intelligence agencies' anti-Pakistan activities on Afghan soil, and added: "Israel's secret agency Mossad and the Indian secret agency RAW are using Afghan soil against Pakistan."

An Urdu-language daily has quoted Major-General (Retired) Rahat, a former military officer, as saying thus: "The US, India and Israel have been trying to capture our nuclear assets or to get the nuclear programme rolled back. For this purpose, they have been hatching conspiracies to weaken the two strong institutions of Pakistan, the army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)." Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, the emir of Jamaat-e-Islami for Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly North-West Frontier Province), has urged the Pakistani government to quit its role in the war on terror, stating: "The US-India-Israel nexus is against Pakistan, and is busy hatching conspiracies against Pakistan's nuclear power."

Lt.-Gen. Talat Masood, a retired military officer and well-known political commentator, in an article that urged the Pakistan Army to stop supporting militant organisations, accused the US, India, Israel, and non-proliferation groups worldwide of demonising Pakistan. He said: "Indian, Israeli and non-proliferation lobbies are... active in demonising Pakistan and trying to block, delay and reduce US assistance. And these detractors are working overtime to keep

reminding the Obama administration of Pakistan's history of proliferation and its support of the Taliban and jihadi groups – not realising that all of these policies were adopted in a certain historical and geostrategic context. The situation now is indeed very different, as Pakistan is locked in a survival struggle fighting the Taliban and militants on a broad front...."

Speaking at a seminar, Majeed Nizami, the veteran editor, said: "The United States has drawn up a plan to hand over Pakistan to India, and Iran to Israel, because Pakistan is an atomic power and Iran is heading to be an atomic power." The *Roznama Khabrain* wrote in late 2008 that there was "confirmed information about a [likely] Indian attack on Pakistan's nuclear installations" and added: "In order to attack Pakistan's nuclear installations and the installations of the [Pakistan] air force with the help of Israel, the Indian Air Force painted the Indian flag on Israeli fighter planes."

Criticising the deployment of additional US troops in Afghanistan, Lt.-Gen. Hamid Gul said: "India and Israel have placed stress upon the US to destroy Pakistan's nuclear assets before leaving Afghanistan.... India and Israel will not be safe if the US withdraws from Afghanistan and Pakistan's nuclear assets, ISI, and Pakistan Army remain intact."

In early 2009, *Roznama Jasarat*, an Urdu-language newspaper of the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, alleged that Israel was spying on Pakistani nuclear programme via Fatah, the organisation of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. It said: "Israel is directly monitoring Pakistan's nuclear programme through the Fatah network in Pakistan...." The Urdu daily added that Israel had stations in Afghanistan and India to monitor the Pakistani nuclear programme.

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Liaqat Baloch, arguing that the Americans were now suffering defeat in Afghanistan, said: "The US and Israel want to capture the nuclear installations of Pakistan and gain access to the water and air of Pakistan to reach Iran and China." Abdul Basit, the spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Office, also officially described what he called an "India-Israel nexus" as a threat to regional security in South Asia, saying: "We are concerned over the domination of India in traditional and nuclear arms. However, minimum nuclear deterrence would be maintained [by Pakistan] in the region for lasting peace in the region."

On the evening of May 1, 2010, Faisal Shehzad, a US citizen of Pakistani origin, carried out a failed car bombing in New York's Times Square. A video that emerged of Faisal Shehzad later showed him embracing Hakimullah Mehsud, the emir of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, or the Movement of Pakistani Taliban).



Sajid Ansari, a columnist with *The Frontier Post*, a Peshawar-based daily, alleged that the Times Square terror attack was plotted by the CIA and the Israeli Mossad. He wrote: "It may be true, in the wake of 'Times Square Bomb', possibly a 'set-up' plan [has been] made by CIA and Mossad, to create pleas and justifications to attack and invade Pakistan, as a last resort after failing to achieve the 'desired objectives' to denuclearise Pakistan, exactly as they did with Iraq on a fake CIA report of the presence of WMDs [weapons of mass destruction] in Iraq.... However, in the case of Pakistan, after miserably failing to lay hands on Pakistani nuclear sites and arsenals, through the... Pakistani Taliban and Indian army infiltrators in the cities of the... [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of] Pakistan, the US/CIA and the Mossad have now possibly 'set up' a plan to attack Pakistan [using the pretext provided by the] 'Times Square bomb'. And they will, as they are out of time, because President Barack Obama has asked them to 'finish the job' by July 2011.... I foresee a possible pre-emptive (nuclear) attack by US and NATO on Pakistan, in collaboration with India...."

Soon, Faisal Shehzad was arrested by the US authorities as he was trying to flee the US. A report in the Roznama *Nawa-i-Waqt* underlined the fear of an international conspiracy in the arrest of Faisal Shehzad, stating: "The fact that [US] federal attorney [Preet Bharara] is a Hindu with a Jewish wife gives the story an air of a conspiracy against Pakistan, jointly hatched by Indian and Israeli lobbies in the US." The report also alleged that a number of Pakistani-American citizens were working as American agents and that Faisal Shahzad could be one of them.

### **The Jews Undermine the Identity of Pakistan**

In the intellectual world of Pakistani leaders, Israel, India and the US are out to wipe out the identity and existence of Pakistan. Much of the antisemitism that is witnessed in Pakistan is rooted in perceived threats seen by Pakistani leaders as emanating from a range of national and international issues, including from statements on the human rights situation in Pakistan by various non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Even the internal struggle between secularists and religious groups to shape the identity of Pakistan – a struggle that has been ongoing since the creation of the Islamic nation in 1947 – is described in terms of antisemitic references to Jews and Israel, Hindus and India, Christians and the US-led Western world.

In 2008, Jamaat-e-Islami leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed accused "the United States and the Jews" of trying to make Pakistan a secular

country. He went on to state that the US-led war on terror is a pretext for secularising Pakistan, and called US aid a dangerous conspiracy against Pakistan. In the latter half of 2010, a move by liberal politicians of the ruling Pakistan People's Party (PPP) to press for an amendment in Pakistan's controversial blasphemy law invited strong opposition from all religious organisations in Pakistan. Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Munawwar Hasan called for foiling "secular conspiracies" against Pakistan. A number of religious organisations joined hands against what they called a "conspiracy of the secular lobby in Pakistan at the behest of the West to repeal the blasphemy laws". During the August 2010 floods that devastated most of Pakistan, Qari Hanif Jalandhari, secretary general of the Wafaqul Madaris al-Arabia (which controls thousands of Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan), condemned the secular NGOs for their flood relief work, stating that they were anti-Islam and were advancing a Western agenda through their relief work.

Madrassas – Islamic seminaries – are seen as fortresses of Islam and as essential to the identity of Pakistan. Commenting on the role of Pakistani madrassas, Pakistani women's rights activist Dr. Fouzia Saeed remarked in early 2010: "All madrassa students are not suicide bombers, but every suicide bomber hails from a madrassa.... The ideology of militancy uses madaris [Islamic seminaries] as breeding grounds for extremists, militants and suicide bombers."

However, demands by Pakistani social reformers and Western countries to eradicate extremist influence from madrassas are seen as a Western and Jewish plot to strike at the roots of Pakistan. An attempt in April 2008 to organise a cricket competition – a sport widely popular in South Asia – among students of various madrassas was opposed by the clerics of the Jamiat Ahle Sunnat and the Wafaqul Madaris Al-Arabia. "None of our madrassas will take part in the cricket tournament, and if anyone does, we will take action against it as per the rules," said Maulana Qazi Abdur Rashid, the deputy secretary of Wafaqul Madaris al-Arabia, at a press conference attended by other Islamic scholars too.

Pakistan's Minister of Education Khwaja Asif Ahmed Ali said in November 2010 that the madrassa system of education in Pakistan could not be abandoned just because Western countries did not like it. In January 2010, the executive council of Wafaqul Madaris al-Arabia, which controls more than 10,000 madrassas in Pakistan, adopted a resolution criticising the media propaganda against madrassas. The resolution said that linking religious seminaries to lawlessness, insecurity and terrorism is the "biggest lie of history"

and "part of Jewish and Christian propaganda". The executive council which adopted the resolution included Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Maulana Samiul Haq, Salimullah Khan, Mufti Rafi Usmani and others. On another occasion, Qari Muhammad Hanif Jalandhari, chief of Wafaqul Madaris al-Arabia, said that the "baseless propaganda campaign" against the madrassas was launched under "a Jewish plan to defame them".

Views about Jews and Israel are also defined by a conception held by numerous ideologues in Pakistan that out of the two states of Pakistan and Israel, only Pakistan should exist. This viewpoint has been singularly articulated by Lt.-Gen. Hamid Gul: "Two states came into existence in 1947 and 1948: one, Pakistan; two, Israel. The two are threats to each other. Ultimately, only one of them will survive."

In 2010, a pro-Palestinian Pakistani website published an article stating: "All Pakistanis who support the just cause of Palestine and like-minded people across the world are on the same page. Our supporters across the world are our natural allies. Our opponents are on [the] wrong side of history. They cannot be our friends or allies without siding with us against Zionist Israel. Factually speaking, founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam [Great Leader] Mohammad Ali Jinnah, always demanded a just and honourable solution to the Palestine problem. A just solution means one Palestine, and not the Zionist state of Israel. The supporters of Israel are not qualified to influence Pakistan's foreign policy. The United States must choose between support for Israel and friendship with the Pakistani nation. We Pakistanis must ask the US and other allies of Israel in Europe and other continents who they choose: the Pakistani nation or the Zionist regime of Israel. It is high time to tell everyone that Pakistan and supporters of Israel cannot go together...."

In 2010, WikiLeaks published on its website classified Pentagon documents and diplomatic cables from US embassies worldwide, causing an international controversy. Some of the WikiLeaks revelations exposed Pakistani military and political leaders' private opinions of each other and Arab leaders' opinions of Pakistani leaders, thereby straining relationships and ties among Islamic nations. The Pakistani Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), which held a meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani in Islamabad, described the WikiLeaks revelations as "an attempt to damage the *tashakkhus* [identity/image] of Pakistan".

Speaking about the Pentagon documents, which referred to Pakistan's continued support of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in

Afghanistan, former ISI chief Hamid Gul blamed Israel and India for the leaks, stating that India and Israel wanted to use the US against the ISI. A report in the *Roznama Nawa-i-Waqt* daily also quoted Hamid Gul as saying that the documents were leaked by WikiLeaks to create a charge sheet against Pakistan Army Chief General Ashfaq Kayani and Lt.-Gen. Shuja Pasha, the chief of ISI and Kayani's successor, over the issue of support to the militants in Afghanistan.

Former Pakistani minister Azam Khan Hoti described the release of US diplomatic cables as part of "the CIA's game plan" to create differences between Islamic nations and to defame all those who refused to toe the US line on international relations. Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Munawwar Hasan said: "The US is behind the WikiLeaks revelations, the purpose of which is to cause turmoil in Pakistan and conflicts among Islamic nations."

Pakistani columnist Matloob Ahmad Warraich penned a lengthy article in Urdu, alleging a Jewish/Christian/Indian conspiracy behind the WikiLeaks revelations. Given that his article summarises many arguments at one place which otherwise are articulated by Pakistani leaders in bits and pieces, detailed excerpts from the article are worth stating here:

"The facts are something like this: the owners of the WikiLeaks website are purely Americans and Jews, who from time to time achieve their objectives by causing havoc to international peace....

"In the US, the fast growing and prospering religion of Islam was giving trouble to the orthodox Christians and Jews. And according to a survey, by 2010 an added 7 per cent of Americans would have converted to Islam if there had been no 9/11, and by 2050 Islam would have become the largest religion followed in the US.... After the Twin Towers incident in America, we find a wave of transformation and hatred there, the brunt of which was borne only by the Muslim community there....

"After the tragedy of 9/11, which was in fact a tragedy for Muslims, the alliance between our eternal enemy India and Israel has prospered so much that Israel, which used to fear us [i.e. Pakistan], now together with our enemy is grinning at us. And we keep quiet at times due to the allegations [against us] in the [2008] Mumbai attacks and at times for the allegation of the [2001] attack on the Indian parliament.... If the present WikiLeaks revelations are seen in an international context, it comes near to the possibility that Israel and the international organisation of Jews [WikiLeaks, presumably] have once again tried to hatch a conspiracy to cause instability in the Islamic world by making Muslims fight against each other....

"On the one hand, there is an attempt to pit Saudi ruler Shah Abdullah against Iran. The world knows that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, once declared Hitler by WikiLeaks, is not only fighting valiantly against the international conspiracy of the US, but was also successful in briefing world opinion about the truth, in his last United Nations address. The US would not dare to attack Iran... despite all efforts, while in the past it has achieved its goal by bringing Iran and Iraq to the battlefield. The two big Muslim forces were weakened not only in their defence and economy by the Iraq-Iran War [of the 1980s], but over two million people were killed in this war, which lasted for more than 10 years.

"Even then the thirst of these white wolves [i.e. Western nations] was not quenched. And the US unleashed a reign of barbarism on the defeated Iraqis, and trampled the remaining Iraqis under its defiled feet. The American and the Jewish lobbies, whose mouths have tasted human blood – these wolves now want to create confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran.... According to WikiLeaks, the Saudi ruler has suggested to the US to attack Iran's nuclear programme.

"And on the other hand, India is engaged in its impious game plan [against Pakistan], and the world knows that Indians residing in the US make the second largest community and these Indian-born Hindus are occupying major posts and positions in the US, including in the daily life there.

"On the other hand, Pakistan, which is trapped in its internal trouble and economic instability, has been getting monetary benefits from its friendly country Saudi Arabia. In every difficult situation – be it the wars of 1965 and 1971 or be it the Pakistani nuclear programme or the earthquake of 2006 [sic] or the flood of 2010 – the Saudi government has always stood by Pakistan; it has never left the Pakistani people alone in a difficult time. There might be some truth in this fact [revealed by WikiLeaks] that Saudi Arabia may have had differences of opinion on the issue of the woman ruler [i.e. Benazir Bhutto being the prime minister of Pakistan] or due to the personal dislike of [her widower] President Asif Ali Zardari, but when it comes to the people of Pakistan, the Saudi people have always been ready to give free oil and blood to Pakistan.

"Through WikiLeaks, Jewish and Indian lobbies have tried to kill many birds with one stone.... WikiLeaks and the Jewish and Christian lobbies should note that no rescue operation can save them if the jungle catches fire. India and Israel go unmentioned in WikiLeaks, and this is what [leads] us to wonder."

## Conclusion

In addition to the thousands of Islamic clerics in small towns whose opinions fail to appear in the major newspapers for want of space, some of the prominent Pakistani personalities and ideologues who are engendering anti-Jewish and anti-Israel prejudices and conspiracy theories in Pakistani society are senior editor Majeed Nizami, former Pakistan Army officer Lieutenant-General Hamid Gul, jihadist demagogue Zaid Hamid, Jamaat-e-Islami chief Syed Munawwar Hasan and his predecessor Qazi Hussain Ahmed. While it can be argued that the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan cannot, for example, win an election on its own, it is nevertheless the largest mass organisation in the country. Like other religious organisations, its role in shaping public opinion in Pakistan is thorough.

Retired Lt.-Gen. Hamid Gul, the former chief of the ISI, has assumed the role of a spokesman for the Taliban and al-Qaeda in recent years. On numerous occasions and in media interviews, he has analysed various Pakistani and international issues of the day in terms of a presumed unified role played by the US, India and Israel internationally. Zaid Hamid is a political campaigner who has been leading the mass movement in Pakistan in favour of jihad and has been strengthening antisemitism in the country.

Majeed Nizami is not an average Pakistani journalist trying to shape public opinion in Pakistani society. He enjoys a greater role in influencing a generation of Pakistani journalists. Nizami heads the Nazaria-e-Pakistan Trust, or the Ideology of Pakistan Trust, a think tank created under a legislation passed by the legislative assembly of Punjab, the most influential province in Pakistani politics, the armed forces and governance. In October 2010, Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani lauded Nizami for his 50 years of journalism and for keeping alive "in all circumstances" the Two-Nation Theory – the idea that Hindus and Muslims cannot live together, which led to the creation of Pakistan.

Antisemitism is prevalent among all sections of Pakistani society, including leaders of a large number of religious organisations which have mass followings, military officers who cannot be identified, former military leaders who can be quoted by name in the media, politicians and lawmakers, columnists and journalists, and others. There is a small liberal class of political commentators, members of NGOs, columnists and journalists whose views are limited to mainly the English-language media, especially the *Dawn* and *Daily Times* newspapers.

However, in Pakistan it is Urdu-language newspapers and magazines, not the English-language media, that exercise influence on mass public opinion. It is pertinent here to note that in Pakistan, the right-wing is the mainstream, which means that the public space for expression of views by the secular commentariat is indeed small.

## Soldier-Jihadism in Pakistan

There is conclusive evidence that the jihadi organisation Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) is a constituent unit of the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). As India agonises over the killing of Sarabjit Singh (an Indian national accused of spying by a Pakistani court) in a Lahore jail and a tit-for-tat attack on a Pakistani inmate in India, it would be relevant to examine some reports of how the Indian government has been releasing JeM prisoners in recent years.

According to the January 7-13, 2011, issue of *Al-Qalam*, an Urdu-language Pakistani weekly published by the JeM, JeM members were among a number of Pakistani prisoners released by India as a gesture of goodwill. The JeM leadership knew about it ahead of their release.

The five – Muhammad Adnan, Muhammad Bilal, Syed Waqar Shah, Muhammad Manzoor and Muhammad Aslam – were welcomed at the Wagah border by Qari Zarrar, an official of the Al-Rehmat Trust, a charity associated with the JeM. Of them, Adnan and Bilal, who were senior militants, were accorded a “spectacular welcome” at the JeM headquarters in Bahawalpur.

According to the April 22-28, 2011, issue of *Al-Qalam*, Saiful Maluk, another JeM militant, was freed from an Indian prison after serving a prison term of over five years. After his release, Maluk was honoured at the JeM headquarters. Speaking on the occasion, JeM leaders Maulana Muhammad Talha and Maulana Muhammad Shafiq Abu Jandal declared that the Al-Rehmat Trust would use all resources to free all its members from Indian prisons. These reports leaving one with a sobering thought about the performance of Indian intelligence, the argument here not being that India has been freeing militants knowingly.

In an entirely different context of the hijacking of the Indian passenger plane to Kandahar in 1999, India released three militant



commanders – Maulana Masood Azhar, who went on to establish the deadliest of anti-India organisations, JeM; Omar Saeed Sheikh, who is in jail over his role in the beheading of US journalist Daniel Pearl; and Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, who re-emerged last March from hiding for a decade and gave an interview in which he stated: “We still run training camps on both sides of the Line of Control. India must remember that the US has been defeated in Afghanistan; in four months’ time India will see what we are capable of.”

Close observers of Pakistan know that militant commanders emerge from hiding when the ISI so desires. The JeM is a formidable jihadi organisation. Even if a single militant escapes from prison, it can have long-term consequences for India like Masood Azhar, who went on to found the countrywide jihadi network of JeM. Over the past few years, several JeM militants have been killed in Jammu & Kashmir. Last November, JeM commander Shaukat Ali, aka Yasir, from Pakistani Kashmir was killed in a major fight against the Indian security forces in Baramullah.

After the hanging of Afzal Guru this year, *Al-Qalam* confirmed that he was a JeM member, observing: “In the history of Kashmir jihad and among the martyrs of Jaish-e-Muhammad, another great mujahid has been included.” In April 2012, hundreds of Taliban militants launched a daring attack on a prison in the Pakistani town of Bannu, freeing Adnan Rasheed and other militants. Rasheed, a former Pakistan Air Force commando, had been jailed for assassination attempts on General Pervez Musharraf.

This month, the Taliban in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region launched a new jihadi magazine called *Azan*, which contains an interview with Rasheed in which he talks about his childhood, education and job dissatisfaction in the air force. He reveals that his first jihadi inclination emerged when India released Masood Azhar. Importantly, he notes that he was about to go to Germany for higher education when the 9/11 attacks took place and his colleagues persuaded him in favour of the jihadi path.

Rasheed’s narration in first person speaks of how he joined a clandestine jihadi group, Idarat-ul-Pakistan, or the institution of Pakistan, functioning inside the Pakistan Air Force. The group’s mission was, according to him, to prepare jihadis for all three wings of the military – army, navy and air force. Rasheed also notes how he was led by senior military officers to believe that JeM founder Masood Azhar was appointed emir for Pakistan by Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

Rasheed narrates later experiences of how his boss granted him four months' leave to train at a JeM training camp in Mansehra district, the ISI-sponsored line being that until the jihadi takeover of Pakistan materialises, all of them had to work and train under the organisational leadership of JeM since Masood Azhar was, ostensibly, the Taliban's emir for Pakistan.

Rasheed observes: "(Later, it) was revealed to me that neither Masood Azhar nor (militant commander) Haji Abul Jabbar was officially appointed emir for Pakistan (by Mullah Omar); they were working under the ISI. So, I went to my emir of Idarat-ul-Pakistan, Dr Y, and told him that, 'Brother, we are wronged! There is no difference between us and the Jaish-e-Muhammad. We are soldiers in uniform and they are soldiers without uniform. How strange it is that we follow them and they take instructions from our institution – the ISI!'"

This interview conclusively establishes that the JeM is an institution of the ISI. While it has been known that the ISI has created and nurtured terrorist organisations for the past several decades, Rasheed's interview clearly brings an image of the Pakistani military as having two parallel levels of organisational functioning in which jihadis and soldiers work together, sometimes even without knowing who is working under whom. It suits Pakistan as it has been using jihadis right since its creation in 1947, starting from Kashmir and Balochistan.

It is good citizenship to bear in mind that the common people in Pakistan and India are of good nature, stand for good neighbourly relationship and, according to a recent testimony of ex-Indian spy Mehboob Elahi who met Sarabjit Singh in Pakistani jail, common Pakistani prisoners would not attack Indian inmates. The factors leading to the premeditated killing of Sarabjit Singh in Lahore, therefore, remain to be answered.

# Balochistan under Pakistan Military Boot

**A**s it is happening in Balochistan now, Pakistani army was engaged in killings and torture of Bengali people in East Pakistan when a courageous Goa-born Pakistani journalist Anthony Mascarenhas collected reports and published an article titled Genocide in *The Sunday Times* of London of June 13, 1971. His article exposed the Pakistan Army's war crimes and drew international attention to the issue of what is now Bangladesh. In the case of Balochistan, roughly the size of Italy, a similar situation prevails now as the Pakistani army is abducting and killing Baloch political activists, lawyers and journalists whose mutilated bodies are found every week.

In recent years, thousands of Baloch people have gone missing, having been abducted by Pakistani intelligence agencies which torture them, kill them and dump their bodies by roadsides. Respected human rights advocate Mir Mohammad Ali Talpur recently put the number of missing Balochs at 18,000 and of the tortured bodies found in Balochistan and Karachi at 800. Mutilated bodies of Balochs were found from the Pirkoh area of Dera Bugti district on March 18. Led by the non-political group Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, the relatives of missing persons marched 2,000 km from Quetta, arriving in Islamabad four months later on February 28, to raise awareness of the issue. Nasrullah Baloch, the group's chairman, warned: "The Baloch genocide is... under way."

In January, several mass graves were found near Tutak village, from which over a hundred bodies were recovered before the Pakistan Army stepped in. Rebel leader Brahmdagh Bugti, whose grandfather and Baloch elder Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti was killed in a Pakistani military operation in 2006, said recently that 160 mass graves existed, but the media was prevented from reporting about them. Among the locals, there is no doubt about the complicity of the Pakistan military and the paramilitary forces in the crime. In September 2012, the then Chief

Justice of Pakistan's Supreme Court, Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, described Pakistani intelligence agencies as "death squads" after they refused to comply with 60 of his orders from 68 court hearings.

In Balochistan, a poor but geographically the largest and resource-rich province, grievances accumulated over the past few decades due to the Pakistani government's negligence of educational, and economic development or denial of jobs to local people in government departments dominated by Punjabis are plenty. Consequently, Balochistan has witnessed several phases of insurgency. Pakistan has carried out military operations in 1948-52, 1958-60, 1962-69, 1973-77 and from 2004 onwards.

Currently, the Pakistani army is also killing camels and other livestock, as revealed in videos emerging on the Internet, to punish villagers for supporting Baloch activists. According to Balochistan's top security officer Major General Ejaz Shah, schools in Panjgur, Turbat and Makran regions have stopped playing the Pakistani national anthem.

In the past seven years, 30 Baloch journalists were killed in the province, the Balochistan Union of Journalists has noted. While the Pakistani media report the Balochs' demand for the freedom of their loved ones abducted by Pakistani intelligence agencies, they maintain a considered silence on the Pakistani military's brutalities inside Balochistan. Recently, noted human rights campaigner I.A. Rehman accused the Pakistani media of developing "prejudice against the people of Balochistan" owing to its "subservience" to the military establishment and wondered why Pakistani journalists who earn fame by interviewing jihadist commanders were not reaching out to Baloch dissident leaders. Baloch journalists cannot write freely as they fear for their lives, and reporters from elsewhere in Pakistan cannot visit Balochistan except as part of military-supervised trips.

Two categories of genocide are under way in Balochistan: the killings of Baloch activists and journalists by the Pakistani intelligence agencies, and the systematic cleansing of ethnic Hazara Shias by Sunni jihadist groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and its sister concern Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, which enjoy the support of Pakistani intelligence, the Taliban and the Punjab government. The situation of Hazara Shias is particularly hopeless; their religious places are attacked in targeted blasts by suicide bombers or they are simply pulled out of passenger buses and shot dead after their government-issued national identity cards reveal their Shia surnames, more so as they return from pilgrimage to Iran. Local Hindus too have been forced to migrate out of the province and to India.

Muhammad Akbar Notezai, a Quetta-based journalist, thinks that the situation in Balochistan can be improved if Pakistan takes some urgent steps: release the missing persons, stop the kill-and-dump policy against Baloch nationalists, remove the sense of deprivation among people through educational and economic development, and grant autonomy by permitting the province to gain control over its natural resources. However, the situation in Balochistan may no longer be a case of economic deprivation. Syed Fazl-e-Haider, the author of *Economic Development of Balochistan*, writes: "Enforced disappearances are fuelling the fires of an insurgency and pushing more and more frustrated youth into the separatist camp." He warned: "If the (provincial) government... does not initiate the dialogue process with the separatists, it will be tantamount to a failure of electoral politics in the province."

As in Bangladesh, the Pakistani army's role in Balochistan is central to the issue. Anthony Mascarenhas succeeded in exposing the war crimes in Bangladesh as he could move his family from Pakistan to England, but for any Pakistani journalist to write about the Pakistani army's crimes in Balochistan would require much more courage. Not long ago, investigative journalist Syed Saleem Shahzad was killed after he wrote about al-Qaeda's presence in the Pakistani military. The US, too, adds to Pakistan's overall misery by supporting the Pakistani army, thereby enabling it to continue the killings in Balochistan and elsewhere. On February 12, the US State Department dismissed the idea of an independent Balochistan, stating: "The US respects the territorial integrity of Pakistan."

In Bangladesh, the world did not know of the Pakistani army's war crimes. In Balochistan, the Pakistan army's crimes are known and continuing.

# Maulana Azad's Forecasts for Pakistan

**D**uring the 1930s through the forties, Muhammad Ali Jinnah was the toast of Muslim politics in India, but it was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first education minister of independent India, who had a substantive vision for human progress. Azad's real name was Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin; he was born in Mecca on November 11, 1888, and died in Delhi on February 22, 1958. A year before Pakistan's creation, in an April 1946 interview he gave journalist Shorish Kashmiri, Maulana Azad forecast the darkness that engulfs Pakistan today.

The interview for Lahore-based Urdu magazine *Chattan*, translated by former Indian minister Arif Muhammad Khan and reproduced in the columns of Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan recently, is notable for a series of sociological verdicts Azad delivered on the future of Pakistan, which was not born yet.

First, Azad was a respected Islamic scholar and argued that Islam could not be the basis for creating countries, warning that the Muslim League's politics for the creation of Pakistan “will ensure that Islam will become a rare commodity in Pakistan” and “Pakistan, when it comes into existence, will face conflicts of a religious nature”. Soon after Pakistan's creation, Islamic clerics were engaged in a religious war. Pakistan witnessed a major riot in 1953 when the Jamaat-e-Islami and other religious groups fought street battles, demanding that Ahmadi Muslims be declared infidels.

In 1974, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto enacted a legislation declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims. This religious hatred flourished during the 1980s as General Zia-ul-Haq unleashed Islamisation in Pakistani society. It continues today as Sunni militants systematically murder Shia Muslims throughout Pakistan. And as the Taliban and other jihadists win over Pakistan's mainstream, it appears that most Pakistanis who follow Barelvi Islam will be declared infidels for

listening to music, not growing beard or for simply visiting a Sufi shrine.

Second, Azad understood that the separatist demand for Pakistan was rooted in the hatred of Hindus. He noted: "This hatred will overwhelm relations between India and Pakistan." Over the course of Pakistan's existence, the only reason why Islamabad has not been able to forge good ties with Delhi, despite courageous efforts by leaders such as Atal Bihari Vajpayee, is Pakistan's reliance on Islam to sustain its identity. Islam guides the Pakistani state to claim any Muslim territory as its own and visualise itself as Madina-e-Saani, or second Madina, the other being the first Islamic state established by the Prophet Muhammad.

Due to heavy reliance on Islam, Pakistan defines its international relations as well as domestic conduct on the basis of its religious ideology: Saudi Arabia and Malaysia become friends, while India is viewed as an enemy. This also means that any country created out of Pakistan, namely Bangladesh or for that matter Balochistan, which is clamouring for secession from it, can be expected to generally have friendly relations with Pakistan's neighbours. Pakistan, in its current form, is built to last as a system of hatred against its own religious groups or neighbouring countries.

Third, Maulana Azad understood that Pakistan would be unable to govern itself and that its stability would be tested. He forecast that several factors would lead to military dictatorships: absence of good relations with neighbours, burden of foreign debt, loot of national resources by industrialists, and so on. He observed: "Right from its inception, Pakistan will face some very serious problems: incompetent political leadership will pave the way for military dictatorships, as has happened in many Muslim countries." Pakistan witnessed military coups in 1958, 1969, 1977 and 1999, followed by years of dictatorship, and even when under a civilian government it was ruled by the army chief, the de facto ruler of Pakistan.

Fourth, Azad predicted that East Pakistan would secede from West Pakistan. He noted the political disunity in the Arab world and argued that Muslims had "never created durable political unity" anywhere. He said: "The moment the creative warmth of Pakistan cools down, the contradictions will emerge and will acquire assertive overtones. These will be fuelled by the clash of interests of international powers and consequently both wings (of Pakistan) will separate." East Pakistan became Bangladesh in 1971, and Balochistan is clamouring to secede.

Fifth, a least-studied aspect of Muslim societies is the fact that clerics are derided by Muslims for their problems, but it may sound contradictory to note that the same clerics also rule over Muslim consciousness. Azad, himself trained as a cleric, was acutely aware of the damaging role played by Islamic clerics (ulema) throughout history. He noted: "Our history is replete with the doings of ulema who have brought humiliation and disgrace to Islam in every age and period.... How many ulema find an honourable mention in the Muslim history of the last 1,300 years?"

As can be said of Muslims in the 21st century, Azad observed that Muslims were "flowing" like an unthinking mob. "The problem is that Muslims have not learnt to walk steadily; they either run or flow with the tide. When a group of people lose confidence and self-respect, they are surrounded by imaginary doubts and dangers and fail to make a distinction between right and wrong." Azad said, "Muslims will not hear anything against Pakistan unless they experience it." He also noted: "The evil consequences of Partition will not affect India alone; Pakistan will be equally haunted by them." Pakistan's problems are associated with Islam.

Azad, who was aware that Pakistan was being created in the hatred of Hindus, warned: "We must remember that an entity conceived in hatred will last only as long as that hatred lasts."

It is a tragedy for the Pakistani people that Pakistan's problems cannot be resolved if the country continues to exist in its current form. Saqlain Imam, a senior Pakistani journalist, says it is fortunate for the Pakistan's ruling elite that no neighbouring power is interested in the dismemberment of Pakistan, but it is unfortunate for the people that the Taliban and other jihadist forces will keep growing, ultimately posing a serious threat to international security.



# **SECTION V**

## **The Pakistan Threat**



# India Under Pakistani Intelligence Assault

**R**eading Pakistani newspapers, you do not get the impression that Indian spy agencies are involved in Pakistan. Sure, there are accusations that India's external intelligence, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), is supporting the Pakistani Taliban and secular Balochi rebels, but the nature of these allegations is essentially political and rhetorical. On the contrary, it appears that the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI, has left its footprints across India. A number of arrests of ISI agents across the country prove its presence.

If you search the websites of Indian newspapers, you will find a regular stream of stories indicating that the ISI is active throughout the country. In the past decade, ISI agents were arrested from towns across India like Ahmedabad, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Mumbai, Delhi, Mohali, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Patiala, Jalandhar, Shimla, Aligarh, Meerut, Kanpur, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Patna, Kolkata, Darjeeling, Agartala, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Bengaluru, and Chennai. To be fair to the domestic intelligence agencies, ISI modules were also routinely disrupted, as the arrests in these cities would signify.

ISI agents are mainly of two types: those engaged in gathering secret information of a military nature, and those involved in recruiting and planning terror modules. Some of them are also involved in flooding the country with fake currency notes. In July 2013, it was also revealed that senior officers in the Lucknow passport office, who were bribed between Rs.50,000 and Rs.500,000 per person, issued passports to at least 50 suspected ISI agents. At times, ISI spies acquired voter and ration cards too. The ISI's boldest move was to recruit Madhuri Gupta, a female diplomat posted in the Indian mission in Islamabad, who was later brought to Delhi and prosecuted.

Let us take a random sample of ISI agents arrested last year. In May, airports in Hyderabad, Bangalore, Mangalore, Chennai, Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram were put on alert over terror threats. Earlier,

Sri Lankan national Shakir Hussain was arrested for being part of a terror plot to bomb United States and Israeli consulates in south India. The plot was traced to a Pakistani diplomat in Colombo. In September, ISI agent Arun Selvarajan was held in Chennai and vital documents regarding the Coast Guard were seized from him. He was connected to a Pakistani handler in Colombo. Selvarajan reportedly had carried out a reconnaissance of the Kalpakkam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu. These arrests indicate the ISI's growing focus on south India.

However, the ISI's main sphere of influence seem to be the western, northern and north-eastern regions. In March 2014, the police arrested Lovedeep Singh, an army clerk in Faridkot, Punjab, on charges of spying for the ISI; they seized photographs of restricted areas and sketches of military installations from him. In May, B.K. Sinha, an army clerk in Jaipur, Rajasthan, was held on charges of sharing secret information with an ISI agent in Nepal. It is troubling that a retired army officer helped to recruit Sinha.

In August, the police in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh arrested Asif Ali for passing information about the army to the ISI. Based on Ali's revelations, army jawan Suneet Kumar was arrested. Suneet was given a laptop that was connected to an ISI operative in Karachi. In this case, too, it seems a retired army official helped recruit Suneet, who "had befriended a girl on Facebook through a childhood friend... whose father had served in the army". In September, Sarda Shankar Kushwaha, an ISI operative wanted in terror-related cases, was arrested from the Nepal border in Bihar. Rattandeep Singh, who was recruited by the ISI to head the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan, was arrested near Gorakhpur town in Uttar Pradesh in September.

In his 2000 book *Pakistan's ISI: Network of Terror in India*, senior cop S. K. Ghosh examined the revelations of arrested ISI agents and noted that its strategy involved the following: Use Kashmiri Muslims and cause subversion and terrorism across India, prepare an extensive ISI network and plant a cadre of terrorists and spies in every part of India, trigger serial blasts in major cities, create insurgencies in parts of India where Muslim population is significant, and create newer fronts in Pakistan's proxy war against India. Speaking of the 1993 Bombay blasts, Ghosh observed that these were "not a Hindu-Muslim problem. It was an India-Pakistan problem." The issue of Islamic terrorism in India can be entirely attributed to the ISI.

Fresh revelations in the 26/11 Mumbai attack case indicate that the intelligence agencies of the US, the United Kingdom and India possessed information that could have helped prevent the attack on

Mumbai. In the 9/11 case, the failure of information sharing among US security agencies made the attack possible. Both these cases illustrate that active defence is essential for homeland security. However, the pluralism and coexistence that India celebrates also mean that Indians have tolerated Naxalite terrorists for more than half a century, though it appears that a hatred of Muslims have made us more alert to the threat of Islamic terrorism. The ISI's activities across India have persisted for several decades.

Before World War I, Britain was swarming with German spies. When Vernon Kell began work in 1909 as the first head of MI5, he worked with limited resources, unable to recruit an assistant for himself. "The keys to Kell's pre-war counter-espionage strategy," notes Christopher Andrew in his book *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5*, were "securing the co-operation of the police, using the Home Office Warrant system... establishing a state-of-the-art database... [which are] still central to Service operations in the twenty-first century." Andrew observes that Kell "succeeded, with police assistance, in rounding up all the German spies of any significance, thus depriving the enemy of advance warning[s]".

Most of the time, the intelligence agencies' contribution fails to get recognised because of the things that do not happen as a result of their successful work. However, let us hope that India's celebrated pluralism does not let the ISI take advantage of it.

# Saudi-Pakistan Role in the Maldives

Different societies have in different ways provided the oxygen required for Islamists to grow in their midst. The liberal atmosphere of Britain, for instance, notably in institutions like the London School of Economics, over the past decades has offered sanctuaries for Islamists, considering their arguments as legitimate against imperialism. It is Saudi Arabia that bankrolls Wahhabism across the world. The Pakistani society has been transformed into a 24x7 seminary for nurturing arguments that are favourable to jihadists and fatal to Muslim reformists. Now, under the Saudi-Pakistani influence, the Maldivian society too tends to follow a jihadist path.

Jihadists are armed Islamists; their methods differ but goals are the same, that is to establish sharia rule. In May, Maldivian national Abu Turab was among those who carried out a suicide bombing in Syria. Tributes to him by jihadists spoke about how Turab was a loving husband and a grandfather. Another Maldivian was killed in Syria a few days later. They were not the first Maldivian suicide bombers. The first was AliJaleel, who attacked a Pakistani intelligence office in Lahore in 2009. Last October, two Syria-bound Maldivian nationals were arrested from Malé as they were getting ready to board a plane. Currently, 20 Maldivians are fighting in Syria. The Maldives is at a turning point in favour of jihadists.

Also, the latest developments connect India's southern shore to jihadist threats emerging via Sri Lanka and the Maldives. In January 2010, Air India planes were alerted against hijacking attempts from airports at Colombo, Dhaka or Yangon. Following the arrest of Sri Lankan national Shakir aka Zakir Hussain in Chennai recently it was learnt that he had made 20 reconnaissance trips to India to facilitate terrorists from the Maldives in order to attack Israeli and US consulates in Bangalore and Chennai. His arrest revealed terror cells operated by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the

Maldives and India. That the threats are real became clear when bombs exploded on a train in Chennai in May. Sri Lanka has stopped its visa-on-arrival facility for Pakistanis, fearing it is becoming a transit point for terrorists.

Terror attacks in India – those in Kashmir or by the Indian Mujahideen elsewhere – have so far been connected to Pakistan, but in the near future, threats will emerge from terrorists not necessarily controlled by the ISI but from those who are ideologically committed by jihad. An instance is where Muslim youth from Tamil Nadu working in Singapore were recruited for jihad in Syria. There are also reports that one Indian went to Iraq to fight as part of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, now called the Islamic State. Indian Muslims are also said to be training as part of al-Qaeda in Pakistan-Afghanistan. From Syria to the Maldives a Pakistan connection is evident, but the Singaporean link points to the rise of ideological jihadists in India.

In February, tourists were furious that hotels in the Maldives had abruptly cancelled their bookings. The cancellations were triggered by the visit of Saudi Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, who booked three entire islands. The Saudi influence on Maldivian society is all too evident. According to Journalist Charles Haviland, Prince Salman promised to build 10 world-class mosques in the Maldives, and Saudi scholars gave \$100,000 for Islamic education and announced scholarships for Maldivians to study in Saudi Arabia. A five-year soft loan of \$300 million was given last year. Maldivians are visiting the Middle East and Pakistan in large numbers to study, and to return. In April, Pakistan's *Roznama Ummat* reported that Saudis are “thinking of building a base consisting of three islands” as well as mosques and madrassas with Pakistani manpower.

The Maldives was a Buddhist society till the mid-12th century when Islam arrived. Now, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are transforming it into a jihadist hub with the help of local leaders. In a recent article, bloggers Azra Naseem and Mushfique Mohamed warned that the 100 per cent Muslim nation of Maldives had become “an attractive prospect” for those advancing Osama bin Laden's agenda of an Islamic caliphate. In 2009, nine Maldivian militants were arrested in Pakistan; the then Maldivian president Mohamed Nasheed confirmed that Maldivians were visiting Pakistan to wage jihad. Nasheed is a secular leader, but as president he aided the Islamist takeover of Maldivian society, like all secular leaders across South Asia (apologies to Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh, whose counter-extremism efforts are worth noting).

According to Naseem and Mohamed, the world view of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who ruled the country from 1978 to 2008, was coloured

by the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran and his education at Cairo's Al-Azhar seminary. In 1997, he enacted a constitution which granted him "the ultimate authority to impart the tenets of Islam", but Islamic groups questioned his religious power. Gayoom began a crackdown, giving birth to the Adhaalath Party, an Islamist force. Ahead of the 2013 elections, secular president Nasheed forged a coalition with the Adhaalath Party, giving Islamists official patronage. The Adhaalath Party, which quit the coalition later, advocates the conversion of the Maldives into a sharia state. Nasheed was unseated in a coup-like situation in 2012. Fatwas dictating dress code for women, banning of music and dancing, and jihadist videos in Dhivehi language on YouTube have become a norm.

The Islamists seem to be having their way: in 2008, non-Muslims were barred from becoming citizens of the Maldives. In 2011, in a bid to please Islamists, hotels were ordered to close spas, but the order was later revoked; an Indian teacher was deported for having a Bible; and the then Maldivian foreign affairs minister Ahmed Naseem rejected a call by the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner Navi Pillay to debate the practice of flogging of women in extramarital cases. In 2012, a court declared gifts given at the SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation) summit as offensive to Islam.

In January, president Abdulla Yameen vetoed a bill criminalising marital rape after a cleric ruled it was un-Islamic; in April, the government began enforcing sharia law that imposes death penalty on 10-year-olds; and the police are on the lookout for atheist posts on Facebook to file cases of blasphemy. New Delhi is shy of any intervention and lacks the moral courage to state publicly that it will assist countries to curb Islamist forces. Before India realises, the Maldives will be transformed into another Pakistan in its backyard.



# The Saudi-Pakistan Threat to India

On February 26, India and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation between them in military training, logistics supplies and exchange of defence-related information. However, it is Saudi Arabia's deepening role in propping up the Pakistani jihadist military state that is creating a long-term security threat to India. While a strong Saudi-Pakistan defence partnership has existed for long, the upswing in the relationship marks a qualitative change, with Riyadh motivated by an urge to overthrow the Shia regime in Syria and counter a nuclear-capable Iran.

There are two immediate reasons behind the growing Saudi insecurity, resulting in Saudi Arabia's move to transform itself as a regional military power. One, Saudi Arabia is deeply dismayed by United States' failure to play a consequential role in the Syrian uprising to overthrow the Bashar al-Assad regime. Two, the White House's policy of rapprochement with Iran is causing anxiety among the Saudis and other Sunni states. Saudi Arabia's insecurity became severe after the Geneva 5+1 pact with Iran, which is aimed at curtailing the Iranian nuclear programme but in effect is rewriting the balance of power in the Middle East.

Consequently, Pakistan has emerged as central to the Saudi strategy, as Riyadh aids the opposition fighters in Syria. Recently, Pakistan army chief General Raheel Sharif travelled to Saudi Arabia and Saudi ministers of foreign affairs and defence, Saud al-Faisal and Salman bin Abdulaziz respectively, visited Pakistan. From Pakistani media reports, it emerges that Riyadh is seeking Pakistani military arsenal for use in Syria. According to the *Roznama Ummat* of February 7, Riyadh asked for two divisions of the Pakistan Army – about 30,000 soldiers and 16,000 support staff – to train Saudi troops. The Saudis are also seeking Chinese-built JF-17 Thunder fighter planes. Media reports from Riyadh reveal that Pakistan was asked to provide anti-aircraft and

anti-tank rockets for use in Syria. Also, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are planning a major military exercise this year.

Although Islamabad has denied that it will provide nuclear technology to Riyadh, such a Pakistani claim is not reliable because: one, the emerging Saudi strategy seems to be aimed at countering Iran's nuclear programme; two, it was reported last year that Saudi Arabia has invested in the Pakistani nuclear programme; three, in recent decades, Pakistan has been transformed into a client state for the Saudis, rendering Islamabad incapable of denying a Saudi request for Pakistani nuclear weapons and technology. On March 7, Pakistani foreign office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam admitted that the Pakistan-Saudi cooperation involved the possibility of "defence production". On the night of March 4, Aftab A. Khokher, the consul general of Pakistan in Jeddah, was chief guest at an event on the Pakistan Navy ship PNS Alamgir, where he noted that the Pakistan-Saudi relations were "beyond any limits".

Liberal Pakistani commentators are worried over the likely use by Saudi Arabia of Pakistani weapons in Syria. First, it could push Iran to respond in kind in Pakistan. During the jihad in Afghanistan in the 1980s, Saudi Arabia had propped up jihadi groups and fundamentalist Sunni madrassas, which are the sole reason for the Shia genocide now unfolding in Pakistan. As the Saudis armed the Sunni militant groups, Iran backed Shia groups in Pakistan.

Second, Pakistani Taliban militants are fighting in Syria to overthrow the al-Assad regime. These militants will someday return to Pakistan, further drowning the country into jihadism. Even now Pakistani writers think that the ground in Pakistan is already paved for Islamic sharia rule. Third, the current peace negotiations between the Pakistani government and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan are seen as having the support of the Saudi leadership. The strengthening of the Taliban and the militants returning from Syria will transform the jihadi landscape in Pakistan in the coming years. At the minimum, the current Pakistani talks with the Taliban will offer a permanent sanctuary to the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters in Waziristan as part of any peace deal.

Pakistan has approved the Saudi line on Syria. At the end of Salman Abdulaziz's visit to Islamabad, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia issued a joint statement on February 17 in which Pakistan underlined the need to overthrow the Shia regime in Damascus. In the statement, Riyadh and Islamabad "called for the formation of a transitional governing body with full executive powers enabling it to take charge of the affairs" in Syria.

Worried over these developments, several Pakistani writers warned Islamabad against getting embroiled in Syria. Columnist Mosharraf Zaidi accused the Nawaz Sharif government of “bartering” Pakistan's sovereignty for money by aligning with Riyadh's interventionist policy on Syria. Journalist Nadir Hassan warned against Pakistan's entanglement in Syria, saying it would alienate Shia Muslims in Pakistan. Senior commentator Ayaz Amir put the blame of Pakistan getting entangled in Syria on two factors: one, Nawaz Sharif's incapability to say no to Riyadh; two, Pakistan's need for cash. Columnist Nazeer Naji advised Pakistan to save itself from the Syrian conflict, warning that its flames would engulf several countries in the region, including Iran, bringing the fire to Pakistan's border.

The Saudi-Pakistan partnership is certain to boost jihadist organisations and Pakistani intelligence agencies which are nurturing them, thereby transforming Pakistan into a complete jihadist military state in the near future. Indian diplomacy aims at improving cooperation with Arab regimes on the basis of the argument that the interests of about seven million Indians working in the Middle East must be defended. India used this argument in 2003 when it rejected a request by the United States to send troops for the Iraq war. However, India must also remember that the Saudis' strengthening of a Pakistani jihadist state entails considerable risks: it will threaten India in the long term; it will destabilise Afghanistan which has been gaining a sense of stability; it will give birth to more jihadist organisations in Pakistan, which are bound to affect a large Muslim population in India, thereby threatening the cohesion of India; and it will cause Sunni-Shia conflicts across South Asia. Hopelessly, India cannot even get the Saudis to moderate their conduct to curb jihadism on India's borders.

# The Next Decade of Jihadism in Pakistan

In the run-up to the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2014, two trends within Islamism in South Asia are likely to have far-reaching implications for regional politics and security. First, jihadist movements in Pakistan and its neighbourhood are getting increasingly emboldened; their leaderships and core organisations remain largely intact and their expectations for greater power are rising amid the emerging security vacuum. Second, jihadist movements and Islamists sympathetic to their goals are increasingly seeking to use political means, including negotiations and elections, to capture power and impose sharia rule.

Islamism may be described as an ideological orientation which seeks to reshape society and politics through the imposition of a radical understanding of Islam. In the wake of the Arab Spring, Islamists in South Asia have increasingly sought to use not just armed struggle but political means to advance their cause. In Afghanistan, the Taliban appear inclined to accept elections and referendum as a means to capture power and rewrite the country's constitution. In Pakistan, the success of Egyptian Islamists inspired Dr. Tahirul Qadri, the religious scholar, to end his self-imposed exile in Canada and stage a Tahrir Square-like mass uprising in Islamabad in January 2013 to unseat the government. The Islamists' current turn towards politics does not mean that they have embraced democratic principles or the rule of law. What it does indicate, however, is the Islamist movements' increasing cohesiveness, mobilisation capacity and desire to achieve power.

This paper examines the essential ideological unity of jihadist groups in Pakistan and its neighbourhood. These groups include the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and the Haqqani Network, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Moreover, it examines how the forthcoming US troop withdrawal has emboldened

jihadist commanders, who hope to expand their Islamist struggle to a wider region, including Kashmir, India and Bangladesh, and possibly also the Middle East and the United States.

### **Jihadism's Essential Unity**

Afghan Taliban fighters work under the IEA, headed by Mullah Mohammad Omar. The Pakistani Taliban militants are united under the TTP, led by Hakimullah Mehsud. Almost all reports in the Western media describe these organisations as separate and ideologically different and there has been a widespread expectation in Western capitals that some of them could be persuaded to work against the others. Sometime around 2010 or 2011, the White House secretly contacted the Haqqani Network to convince them to participate in peace talks. In October 2011, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also warned of military action against the Haqqani Network in a bid to force it to negotiate. When the attempts for peace talks did not materialise, the US sought to create a wedge between the Haqqani Network and the Mullah Omar-led IEA. The fact that Western media reports began describing the Haqqani Network as aligned with al-Qaeda and “operationally independent” of the Taliban led by Mullah Omar indicates how US policy had changed.

Although these groups are active in their respective operational domains, they work for the same ideological objectives. Furthermore, they also share their resources and capabilities in planning and conducting operations. As individual movements, they work to impose sharia rule in their respective domains, but with the expectation that their sharia state will ultimately form part of a larger caliphate. As such, they consider themselves to be arms of the same struggle. Generally, jihadist groups in the Middle East also consider Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen, or the leader of the faithful, leading the supposed global Islamic caliphate. Even the slain al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had offered *bayah* (oath of allegiance) to Mullah Omar. The TTP's letterhead shows Mullah Omar as the Emir-ul-Momineen and Baitullah Mehsud as its founder.

In a January 2013 video, the TTP emir Hakimullah Mehsud made the distinction between the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban clear. He said, “As regards the Afghani Taliban, Emir-ul-Momineen is our emir too, is emir of the Afghan Taliban, and is emir of al-Qaeda too.... He is emir of all Muslims. And all praise be to Allah, we have accepted him as emir with a true heart. There is no question of relations regarding this.” He explained the Taliban's relationship with al-Qaeda: “We are waging

jihād under the command of only one emir. Similarly, al-Qaeda men are our brothers. And we are ready to offer any type of sacrifice with them. They are our *muhajireen* [immigrants] brothers and we are their *ansar* [supporters].... When respected emir Sheikh Osama bin Laden was martyred in Pakistan, our first emotion was that we will take his revenge, and we took it and we will continue to do so in future.”

The IEA has published statements reiterating that the Haqqani Network is part of the Taliban. In 2011, Sirajuddin Haqqani released an audio interview to counter the propaganda that his group was not functioning under Mullah Omar, stating, “The respected Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Muhammad Omar Mujahid is our supreme leader. We follow his directives. We are representing a particular area under the umbrella of the Islamic emirate and act accordingly. We follow the directives of the *shura* in planning and financial matters. In such a situation, there is no question of running a separate organisation, group, or entity.” In mid-2012, Haqqani reiterated, “The stance of the Islamic emirate never changes and we follow the Emir-ul-Momineen in the framework of Islam, without seeking status or material gain. This is enough to assure the world that our organisational affairs are completely controlled and run by the Islamic emirate.” He also told the Taliban magazine *Shariat*, “I am known by the name of Khalifa among mujahideen. I am the governor of Khost province in accordance with the thought, suggestion and order of Emir-ul-Momineen.”

The bombing of the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) base in Khost province in 2009 is evidence of the unity of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Abu Dajana, a triple agent who had been working for al-Qaeda as well as for the Jordanian and US intelligence agencies, carried out the attack. Dajana coordinated the bombing with TTP chief Hakimullah Mehsud and the Haqqani Network. A video which appeared on the Internet later shows Abu Dajana sitting alongside Mehsud to record a statement before the attack. A January 7, 2010, statement from al-Qaeda also noted that the CIA's Khost base was attacked “to avenge the death of Baitullah Mehsud” in a US drone attack. A November 2012 Taliban video noted that Hakimullah Mehsud and Omar Al-Britani, a British militant also known as Abbas, were involved in planning the Khost attack. A statement by the US State Department in the same month noted that the Haqqani Network's chief of suicide operations Qari Zakir was involved in the Khost attack. These pieces of evidence strongly suggest that the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network, the Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda were involved in the Khost attack.

## **The Punjab Hub**

Three formidable organisations in Pakistan have worked separately and together to advance jihadist objectives: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT aka Jamaatud Dawa, or JuD), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), which also functions as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ). LeT and JeM are focused on India, especially on liberating Kashmir, while the SSP/LeJ/ASWJ conglomerate aims to eliminate Shiism by systematically killing Shias. All these groups enjoy some form of support from the Pakistani military intelligence.

Though these organisations have a presence in all areas of Pakistan, their respective leaderships are all based in the Punjab province. Punjab has emerged as a major jihadist hub where at least 170 madrassas were involved in militant activities in 2010. In southern Punjab, Pakistani intelligence agencies reported the presence of 29 al-Qaeda-linked terror groups in 2010. Like al-Qaeda and the Taliban, these groups believe that Shias are infidels. Furthermore, they share the objectives of al-Qaeda and the Taliban with regard to America, Israel and India.

Some other formidable groups banned by Pakistan include the Harkatul Mujahideen, the Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami, the Hizb ut-Tahrir, and Lashkar-e-Islam and Ansarul Islam, both of which have been active in the Khyber region. In the past 12 years, Pakistan has banned 48 organisations for their role in militancy and sectarianism, while in 2007 it also put the Bareilvi organisation Sunni Tehreek on watch. Roughly speaking, about four dozen organisations in Pakistan are actively teaching and training youth in jihadist objectives, in planning terrorism and providing a supply chain for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The three main organisations which are likely to have a long-term presence in Pakistani society – Jaish-e-Muhammad, Sipah-e-Sahaba, and Lashkar-e-Taiba – are examined below.

### **Jaish-e-Muhammad**

Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) is led by Maulana Masood Azhar, a militant released by India in exchange for the passengers of a plane hijacked to Kandahar in 1999. From its headquarters in the town of Bahawalpur, the JeM leads a Pakistan-wide network of organisational units managed by militant clerics. Addressing students in 2010, JeM cleric Maulana Mufti Abdur Rauf Asghar criticised the secular trends in Pakistani society that teach students how to use computers and mobile phones while forgetting to teach how to use the “arrows and swords” of Islam.

In a lecture available on YouTube, Azhar explains a saying of the Prophet Muhammad on Ghazwa-e-Hind, or the battle of India. (Pakistani groups widely cite the Prophet's saying on Ghazwa-e-Hind.) Azhar claims that the mujahideen will one day rise from India and arrive in present-day Israel to fight alongside Jesus against the non-Muslims. He explains:

“The Lord the Benefactor has chosen the Muslims of Kashmir for a very big fortune/blessing. I haven't come to tell you a lie. I cite a Hadith of the Prophet [Muhammad]. The Prophet of Allah had promised to his companions that 'a group of my ummah will wage jihad in Hindustan [i.e. India]'; .... The Prophet said, 'for the two groups of my ummah, Allah has decreed salvation from hell: one that will arrive alongside Jesus and will wage jihad alongside Jesus, and one [i.e. the second group] that will wage jihad in Hindustan.'”

In recent years, the JeM has organised lectures on “jihadist verses” in the Quran. In 2010, operating under its charitable arm Al-Rehmat Trust, the JeM organised such lectures in towns across Pakistan where clerics, including Maulana Masood Azhar, justified jihad and *qital* (battle). Over 13,000 people and 2,060 students attended these lectures held in Karachi, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Mirpur, Sukkur, Haveli Lakha Okara, Peshawar, Wah Cantonment, Rawalpindi, Swabi, Nawabshah, Quetta, Mansehra, Bannu, Tando Allahyar, Kohat, Sargodha and Khyber Agency. The location of these towns show that the JeM's outreach has sought to encompass the length and breadth of Pakistan. According to a report, “common people participated in these meetings regularly and [were instructed in] lessons that taught translation and interpretation of more than 558 verses on jihad.”

Such lectures are annual events. In 2011, the JeM held 21 sessions. At one such event, the militant cleric Maulana Talha Al-Saif eulogised Taliban leader Mullah Omar, stating, “Tell me – is it possible to separate the concept of jihad and qital and Islamic dignity when we see the life of Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Muhammad Omar? Is it possible that the name of Maulana Muhammad Masood Azhar is called somewhere, and the very concept of jihad does not come to our minds?” In 2012, the JeM organised a 40-day course. A report on an event in Bahawalpur goes thus: “It is perhaps the incident of the Thursday night [in March or April 2012], when there was a transaction of billions of dollars in the entire world to wipe out jihad. Millions of soldiers with lethal weapons were at the borders to wipe out the Muslim Ummah. Thousands of TVs, nets, and radio channels were speaking against jihad. At that time, the Masjid Usman-o-Ali [mosque] in Bahawalpur



was resounding with persuasion to jihad. There was a speech contest on the topic 'History of Jihad'. There were thirty-six speakers representing Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, NWFP [now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa], and unoccupied [Pakistani] Kashmir."

Of all Pakistani jihadist groups, the JeM is the most active in preaching jihad among students of schoolgoing age. It regularly publishes such content on its websites – alqalamonline.com, fathuljawwad.com, rangonoor.com, musulmanbachay.com – as well as in its print magazine *Haftroza Al-Qalam* and other booklets. It also uses mobile phones to deliver MP3 messages on jihad to the youth. After a decade of relative peace in Kashmir, it was reported in 2011 that the JeM had revived its terror plots in India.

### **Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan/Lashkar-e-Jhangvi**

Over the past few decades, the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) has been known for its murderous campaign against Shia Muslims across Pakistan. Its members have been working alongside the Taliban and al-Qaeda. After the Pakistani government banned the SSP and its military arm Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), it began operating as the Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan, which was also subsequently banned. Currently it operates as the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), and is headed by Maulana Ahmad Ludhianvi. The militant leaders of SSP/ASWJ have enjoyed some form of financial and political support from the provincial government of Punjab under Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

In 2011, Punjab's Law Minister Rana Sanaullah admitted that the government had given financial aid to the family of LeJ commander Malik Ishaq, who is said to be involved in scores of murders. He allegedly masterminded the 2009 attack on a Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore. In 2010, Punjab's liberal governor, Salman Taseer, was so sceptical about the government's protection of ASWJ leaders that he asked the chief minister to make it clear whether he was in favour of or against terrorist organisations. Taseer also pointed to the fact that Sanaullah had shared a car with the militant leader. In an editorial, the *Dawn* newspaper slammed the Sharif government for its "ideological affinity" with militants. Under the Sharif government, SSP/ASWJ fighters burned Christian localities in Gojra and Lahore and killed Christians and Ahmadi and Shia Muslims in scores after implicating them on blasphemy charges.

More recently, SSP militants have been engaged in pulling passengers from buses, checking their identity cards to verify if they were Shias, before shooting them dead. The SSP has also beheaded

prominent Shia Pakistanis and attacked Shia congregations with bombs. In August 2012, at least 20 Shia Muslims were pulled out of a bus at Babusar Top, 100 kilometres from Islamabad, and killed. Earlier that year, on February 28, 18 Shia Muslims were pulled out of a bus and shot dead on the Karakoram Highway in Mansehra district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province; another nine Shiites were dragged out of a bus by a mob and killed in Chilas, near Gilgit, on April 3. On February 16, 2013, a bomb ripped through a Shia Hazara neighbourhood of Quetta, killing over 80 people. The LeJ claimed responsibility for the attack. Fears abound now of a genocide of the minorities in Pakistan.

In March 2013, Pakistan's Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated that the LeJ was involved in attacks "throughout the country" and was using Punjab as a hideout. Social media accounts of the SSP/LeJ show that though the SSP is banned, it holds regular events and elections in Pakistani towns to elect leaders. A review of the movement's publications via Twitter, Facebook and YouTube and other websites reveals that it is inculcating among Sunni youth hateful doctrinal interpretations such as, "The Shia is a nasl [race/offspring] of Jews"; "The Sipah-e-Sahaba calls the Shia a bigger infidel than the Jew"; "Shias are the killers of Sunnis"; "Sunnis, have respect; end friendship with Shias". In 2013, the SSP/LeJ combine appeared more powerful in its countrywide presence than the TTP. In March 2013, it took a giant step by publishing an English-language magazine, endorsing al-Qaeda's jihad and revealing its intent to take its fight globally.

### **Lashkar-e-Taiba/Jamaatud Dawa**

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) is a fearsome jihadist organisation founded by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. Its members are located in Afghanistan, India, Iraq and the US. Following a Pakistani government ban, the LeT renamed itself as Jamaatud Dawa (JuD) to work as a charity. The LeT and JuD were banned by the United Nations Security Council after the terror attacks in Mumbai in 2008. After the ban, the group emerged as the Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation (FIF). However, the cadres and leaders of these organisations use the JuD flag. The FIF, too, was designated as a terrorist organisation in 2010 by the US. Hafiz Saeed, along with several other militant commanders, is wanted by India.

Following the UN Security Council ban, the Pakistani government came under international pressure and shut down the group's websites and publications. However, the group began using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The JuD launched a website in mid-2012, releasing a

video in which Hafiz Saeed observed, “Media is a two-sided sword. Instead of it having an impact on us, we want to use it in an effective way. Allah willing, [we] want to convey our message of Dawah [Invitation to Islam] and jihad to the people through it....”

The LeT/JuD/FIF conglomerate has organisational units across Pakistan. In recent years, it has used every opportunity to preach jihad, including at flood relief camps. In August 2010, Rajiv Shah, the chief of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), visited one such relief camp, which sparked a controversy. At another relief camp in 2011, Saeed stated, “The Pakistani press has aligned itself with foreign intelligence agencies and is promoting anti-jihad sentiments among the youth of this country.... Jihad is the only chance for Pakistan’s survival.”

Hafiz Saeed carries a US reward of \$10 million for anyone who can provide information leading to his prosecution. In speeches and articles, he has warned India, “One Mumbai [terror attack of 2008 is] not enough”; “Jihad is the only option left, as India will never let go of Kashmir”; and “Islam is a religion of peace and security, jihad in the path of Allah is an important part of it.” In 2011, JuD leaders addressing a rally in Lahore demanded that the Pakistani government establish a “ministry of jihad” and offered that the “budget for the ministry of jihad will be provided by Jamaatud Dawa”, which “will provide one million trained fighters”. Of all the groups, the LeT/JuD enjoys the most comprehensive support of the Pakistani military.

### **The Next Decade in Pakistan**

Despite 12 years of the US-led war on terror, jihadist organisations in Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained intact, with their organisational and leadership capabilities flourishing. These groups view the US troop withdrawal due in 2014 as America’s defeat and have sensed an opportunity in that. Jihadist organisations gaining in strength not only creates a long-term situation for Afghanistan and Pakistan but also expands the jihadist threat for Kashmir, India and Bangladesh.

Recently, two leading jihadist commanders re-emerged after a decade of hiding, possibly at the behest of the Pakistani military’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). One of them, Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, chief of Al-Umar Mujahideen and one of the three militants released by India in the 1999 Kandahar hijacking case, indicated in an interview after his re-emergence in March 2013 that the US troop withdrawal was a source of inspiration. “India must remember that the US has been defeated in Afghanistan. It’s a success for Al-Umar Mujahideen, too. In four

months' time, India will see what we are capable of.... We have been going wherever Muslims face oppression, and we will continue to go there. We are fighting in the name of Allah. After Kashmir, we will fight in Chechnya and Palestine," he said. He also noted, "We still run [terror] training centres on both sides of the LoC [Line of Control that divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan]. Nothing has changed on the ground."

On March 23, 2010, Abdul Wahid Kashmiri, who took over as LeT chief from Hafiz Saeed after it was banned in 2002, emerged from nearly a decade of hiding, addressing a rally with jihadist commander Syed Salahuddin at Kotli in Pakistani Kashmir. These militant commanders cannot be operating above ground without the ISI's support. At the rally, Wahid Kashmiri warned of a global fight: "It is the right of the mujahideen to fight the invaders and oppressors across the world. The mujahideen who are fighting the occupation forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Kashmir are fully justified in doing so under religious obligations.... The secret of success and freedom from the oppressor lies in jihad and not at the negotiating tables."

In all likelihood, Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar will focus his energy on Kashmir and India, with support from like-minded organisations such as the LeT, the JeM and the ISI. Abdul Wahid Kashmiri and Syed Salahuddin, the supreme commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen, which has its focus on Kashmir, are likely to work together with Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, Hafiz Saeed and Maulana Masood Azhar. Sheikh Jamilur Rehman, the emir of Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen, said in November 2012, "The day the US forces withdraw from Afghanistan, India must leave Kashmir in humiliation." Syed Salahuddin advocates jihad against America, stating explicitly that, "In the prevailing situation, jihad has become mandatory for every Muslim. Political and religious parties of Pakistan should jointly launch jihad against the US." The Pakistani military has chosen to fight selectively against some militants like a few TTP commanders and al-Qaeda's Arab fighters, while allowing others like the LeT/JuD, JeM and the SSP/LeJ to operate freely.

While the SSP has retained its focus on killing Shias, in March 2013, it revealed its intention to wage global jihad and launched an English-language magazine, *Al-Rashideen*, keeping an international audience in mind. An editorial in it indicated that the magazine was also intended for the youth in the West, noting, "We present you this first issue of *Al-Rashideen*. We hope this to be a platform where relevant issues facing the Ummah are studied/analyzed upon by students of colleges and universities, and Muslim youngsters whose first or second language is

English.” In endorsing al-Qaeda’s global jihad, it stated, “[The] only good news... is the rise of the mujahideen movements and their resilience and courage to move on despite heavy odds. And what is driving them? One reason is the spirit of jihad and shahadat [martyrdom] which is expressly present [and permitted] in the Koran and Sunnah [deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad].” In 2013, the group’s leader, Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Ludhianvi, contested the parliamentary elections from two seats in Jhang, an SSP stronghold.

The three movements – LeT/JuD, SSP/LeJ and JeM – have acquired a permanent presence in Pakistani society through their countrywide networks and organisational units. It is difficult to imagine how the Pakistani state will have the capacity or the will to curb these three groups any time soon. Indeed, there are now fears that these groups could join hands and eventually come to influence the Pakistani state the way the Hizbollah and the Hamas have done so respectively in Lebanon and Gaza. Speaking about the long-term role of the LeT, US National Intelligence Director James R. Clapper told a March 12, 2013, hearing of the US Senate’s Select Committee on Intelligence that the LeT “will continue to be the most multifaceted and problematic of the Pakistani militant groups. The group has the long-term potential to evolve into a permanent and even HAMAS/Hizbollah-like presence in Pakistan.”

Speaking about the US troop withdrawal and the Arab Spring, Hafiz Saeed said: “As the US flees Iraq and Afghanistan, we will get Kashmir.... If people took to the streets as they did in Egypt, the governments in India and Pakistan too would have to go.” At a rally in Lahore, he also warned of a global jihad against America, stating, “Atomic Pakistan will shine on the map of the world, Allah willing, and those who try to wipe Pakistan out will be wiped out.”

In a January 2013 video, TTP emir Hakimullah Mehsud spoke about the Taliban’s post-2014 objectives: “I would like to say that in 2014 when the American forces withdraw from Afghanistan..., after that, Mullah Mohammad Omar Mujahid, who is our emir, who is our emir today and [will take over Afghanistan and] will be our emir in future too.... Whatever will be the policy of Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Mohammad Omar Mujahid, we will pursue that policy. Even today, we support his policies, and even after that [i.e., after 2014] his policy will be our policy....” In the same video, Mehsud described the TTP as an international organisation.

In January 2013, Mehsud and his deputy Maulana Waliur Rehman appeared on another jihadist video and vowed to fight to enforce a

sharia-based system in India and in Kashmir. The TTP and al-Qaeda have also warned of a jihadist response to the killings of Muslim minorities in Myanmar and in Assam, India. For example, in 2012, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, the chief of al-Qaeda's media and preaching department for Pakistan, warned New Delhi that "after [the killings of Muslims in] Kashmir, Gujarat, and Ahmedabad [also in Gujarat], if you wish you may add to the long list of your evil deeds Assam as well, don't forget that taking revenge for every single oppressed Muslim living under your subjugation is a trust on our shoulders. These arrogant actions of yours only provide impetus for us to hasten our advance towards Delhi."

He added: "I would like to request the scholars and people of Bangladesh to step forward and help the oppressed Muslims living in their neighbourhood and increase pressure on their heedless government to open its borders for Burmese Muslims and stop its oppressive actions that only make life more difficult for the oppressed Muslims of Burma and Assam."

More recently, a Pakistani official confirmed the Taliban's growing international reach, noting that the TTP had successfully recruited fighters from as far as Fiji. In 2012, after the shootings in Toulouse, France, by Mohamed Merah, there were also reports of white jihadists receiving training in Miranshah, Mir Ali and the Datta Khel areas of North Waziristan.

The TTP had recruited and financed the activities of Faisal Shahzad, who perpetrated the failed bombing on May 1, 2010, in New York's Times Square. Evidently, the attack was planned to coincide with a video statement of its emir, Hakimullah Mehsud, in a bid to rebut Western media reports that he had been killed in a drone strike in Pakistan.

In a video in January 2013, Hakimullah Mehsud pledged to send fighters to the Arab Spring countries, stating, "We are ready for every type of assistance so that the democratic and secular system [in Arab nations] comes to an end, the *kufri* [infidel] system ends, and an Islamic system is established." Locally, the TTP and the non-Taliban militant group Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) made a united front in April 2013, appointing LeI chief Mangal Bagh as their joint head for Khyber Agency. In 2012, Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab – a mixture of the Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami, the JeM and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen – vowed to relaunch the Kashmir jihad. The TTP also works alongside the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) working against the People's Republic of China.

While the TTP is positioning itself for a global fight, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is focused on capturing power in Afghanistan. In 2011, a Pakistani security official, speaking about the strength of the IEA's Haqqani Network, stated, "There are no signs of it getting weaker. In fact, its strength is growing." The group has "between 15,000 and 25,000" fighters and sympathisers. According to Western assessments in 2010, the Afghan Taliban constitute about 20,000-30,000 fighters, with 10 per cent loss of fighters in US military operations. In April 2012, the Indian media reported that the Haqqani Network had 4,000 hardcore fighters. After IEA, the second largest militant group in Afghanistan is the Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who has sought to capture power both through negotiations and through fighting alongside the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Ahead of the US troop exit from Afghanistan, the IEA has begun describing Afghanistan as an Islamic emirate. Key militant organisations have held talks to agree on a power-sharing deal in 2014. According to the Urdu daily *Roznama Ummat*, Taliban commander Sirajuddin Haqqani and Kashmir Khan, representing Hekmatyar, attended a conference somewhere in Afghanistan in mid-2011. Some points agreed upon between them are as follows: permanent US military bases in Afghanistan are unacceptable and jihadist organisations will boycott talks and increase resistance if the US insists on maintaining bases; jihadist groups [will] reject US offers of excluding Mullah Omar or Jalaluddin Haqqani from a future set-up in Kabul; all Afghan militias will be abandoned; all non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and those preaching Christianity will be banned; all foreign security agencies will be banned; local people will be involved in the formation of government; and neighbouring countries will be asked to stop interference in Afghanistan.

Over the next decade, the Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh-based branches of the Hizb ut-Tahrir – which works to establish an Islamic caliphate – will pose a unique threat. In South Asia, the movement advocates for jihad in Kashmir, stating, "Kashmir can only be liberated through organised jihad." Despite the ban on the movement, it has held public rallies in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Hizb ut-Tahrir is ideologically similar to the Taliban, Punjab-based jihadist organisations and al-Qaeda, although there are clear differences among these groups on tactical matters. It is difficult to assess the size of the Hizb ut-Tahrir's membership; its small events and reliance on press statements indicate that its members number in the

hundreds, not thousands. Nonetheless, it specialises in recruiting military officers with the goal of launching a revolutionary coup and imposing Islamic rule. Its members have been arrested in Bangladesh for plotting military coups. Recently, top Pakistani military officers have been arrested for their links with the Hizb ut-Tahrir. In recent years, al-Qaeda, too, has penetrated the Pakistani military, with some ex-officers working for al-Qaeda, and some jihadist organisations in Pakistan are working as extensions of the Pakistani military.

### Conclusion

The strengthening of jihadism in South Asia ahead of the withdrawal of NATO from Afghanistan combined with the prospect of Islamist groups using elections and referendums to capture power in Kabul are working in favour of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Over the next decade, these trends and the Taliban's potential success will also strengthen Pakistan-based Islamist movements. After 2014, the above-discussed jihadist organisations will be left with substantial organisational capabilities to stage attacks and, more importantly, with the strength and prestige to influence populations across the region. Inspired by the Arab Spring, these movements have increasingly looked to political means to capture power and impose an Islamist order. Taken together, these trends will have far-reaching implications for the South Asian Islamist landscape.

Mainstream religious organisations such as the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan are known for their ideological sympathies for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. In the past, however, the Jamaat-e-Islami has been opposed to the encroachment of such armed jihadist organisations because the latter's reliance on violence has threatened to destroy Pakistan itself. For the nationalistic Jamaat-e-Islami, such an outcome would not be acceptable. However, if the aforementioned jihadist movements were to cease violence even as a tactic and commit to politics, groups like the Jamaat-e-Islami will mostly welcome such a move, and especially if a coalition among them would generate greater political power for Islamists. In the coming years, if the LeT, the JeM, the SSP and the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan were to join hands for an electoral bid, they could likely acquire the tacit support of the TTP, and Pakistan could well emerge as a jihadist state and transform the face of South Asia. Such a development would be in keeping with the popular Islamist narrative that Pakistan will become the "Madina-e-Saani" – or the "second Madina", after the first Islamic state founded by the Prophet Muhammad.



During 2007-2008, British diplomats made the first attempts for talks with the Taliban with the mediation of Saudi Arabia. After the Taliban captured US soldier Bowe Bergdahl in 2009, a series of contacts between the Afghan Taliban and the US began, with a political office being set up in Qatar. However, the Taliban saw the contacts as tactical moves that offered them diplomatic and political legitimacy. They described the talks first as contacts for the exchange of Bergdahl with Taliban prisoners from Guantanamo Bay, and later called them a diplomatic front in addition to the Taliban's military front. At times, the US appeared willing to hand over three Afghan provinces to the Haqqanis for a peace agreement.

Towards the end of 2012, it appeared that the Taliban would consider participating in elections under an interim government in Kabul in 2014 if such a government set-up were to result from the talks involving the Taliban, the US, the Karzai government and the Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. At a conference in Chantilly, near Paris, on December 20-21, 2012, the Taliban adopted positions that appeared to have been influenced by the electoral success of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Taliban representatives Mawlawi Shahabuddin Dilawar and Dr. Muhammad Naeem gave a presentation indicating that Mullah Omar does not intend to monopolise power and that Afghanistan's constitution should be Islam-compliant and receive the approval of the people, possibly through a referendum. In March 2013, Mullah Agha Jan Mutasim, a confidant of Mullah Omar, said the Taliban might launch a political party, adding, "The Taliban leaders whose names have been removed from the UN black list will play an important role in the political process." Sensing that a political vacuum could emerge in 2014, some anti-Karzai politicians are also manoeuvring for talks with the Taliban. Pakistan, too, has freed over two dozen Taliban prisoners believing that this will strengthen Islamabad's influence on Kabul.

Taking a cue from the Afghan Taliban, the TTP was reportedly in contact with Pakistani officials throughout 2011, although these contacts produced little or were intended as tactical moves. Ahead of the May 2013 elections in Pakistan, however, the TTP and some Pakistani leaders were more inclined to negotiate. In December 2012, the TTP offered a conditional ceasefire provided Pakistan rewrote its constitution to make it more Islamic and ceased its role in the war on terror.

In all likelihood, Islamist victories in the Middle East in the wake of the Arab Spring influenced the Taliban's new willingness to negotiate.

At the same time, their primary objective is not to enter into a democratic political process but to impose sharia rule. TTP spokesman Ihsanullah Ihsan noted that “a few clauses” did not make the Pakistani constitution Islamic. The Afghan Taliban, too, adopted a similar stance. Syed Muhammad Akbar Agha, the chief of Jaish-ul-Muslimeen, a faction of the Afghan Taliban, said in February 2013 that the Taliban’s demand for enforcement of sharia rule in Afghanistan was “non-negotiable”. In the jihadist reckoning, referendums and elections are merely a means to capture power to impose Islamist rule. This quintessentially Islamist understanding of elections and democracy as a means and tactic to capture power in order to impose Islamic rule was best articulated by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Prime Minister of Turkey, when he stated: “Democracy [is] a train from which you get off once you reach the station.”

Over the next decade, jihadism’s prospects in South Asia will be shaped to a large extent by the ISI that backs them. The ISI’s role in creating and nurturing jihadism in South Asia was irrefutably made clear by Adnan Rasheed, a former Pakistan Air Force commando and now a top-ranking Taliban commander, in a May 2013 interview with the Taliban magazine *Azan*. Rasheed had been imprisoned following an assassination attempt on Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf; however, Taliban militants freed him in a daring jailbreak in April 2012. In the interview, Rasheed described how he came to the realisation that the terrorist group Jaish-e-Muhammad was a subunit of the ISI. As he stated: “[It] was revealed to me that neither [JeM chief] Masood Azhar nor [militant commander] Haji Abul Jabbar was officially appointed emir for Pakistan [by Mullah Omar, as Adnan Rasheed was led to believe while in the Pakistan Air Force]; they were working under the ISI. So, I went to my emir of Idarat-ul-Pakistan [a jihadi unit in the Pakistan Air Force], Dr. Y and told him that, ‘Brother, we are wronged! There is no difference between us and Jaish-e-Muhammad. We are soldiers in uniform and they are soldiers without uniform. How strange it is that we follow them and they take instruction from our institutions the ISI!’”

Jihadism’s appeal runs deep in the Pakistan military. The Afghan jihad of the 1980s, the Kashmir jihad of the 1990s, and the jihad of the post-9/11 era have all had an immeasurable impact on recruitment in the Pakistani military. In the wake of the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, anti-Western sentiment rose to its zenith in Pakistan. Many of the soldiers recruited during these past three decades were exposed to and deeply influenced by jihadist ideology. Their continued

rise to senior positions in the military will likely strengthen the hands of the serving pro-jihadist officers who wield considerable clout when it comes to formulating the country's foreign policies.

The ISI has demonstrated that it is unwilling to repeal its support for jihadist organisations; in fact, in 2010 when US drones began targeting the Haqqani Network in North Waziristan, the ISI shifted the network to a new base of operations. Almost all leading Pakistani newspapers have called for holding the ISI accountable for terrorist activities in the region. The ISI regards itself as the guardian of the Islamic State of Pakistan. As a result, in the next decade, it is unlikely that the ISI will either stop supporting jihadism or obstructing the efforts of Pakistani officials from fostering good ties with India. The machinations of the ISI and the pervasiveness of political Islamism that will inevitably follow will prove to be an enormous obstacle to prosperity and democracy in Pakistan.

# Why India Should Freeze Relations With Pakistan

Given that there has been a terror attack on Indian targets with each resumption of talks with Pakistan, India must now downgrade its relations with that country. In 1999, as Atal Bihari Vajpayee was inking a friendship treaty in Lahore, the Pakistani army was launching the Kargil war. When General Pervez Musharraf was engaged in talks under pressure from the United States, terrorists were being trained for the Mumbai attacks in 2008. Now, with Nawaz Sharif mentioning talks, an Indian consulate is attacked and Indian soldiers are killed by Pakistani invaders. Former Pakistan Air Force chief Asghar Khan has testified in good faith that all wars with India were initiated by Pakistan.

India must respond with a mix of idealism and pragmatism to save Pakistan for the Pakistani people. One, New Delhi must freeze talks and unilaterally curtail ties with Islamabad for a 10-year period to include the next two elections in Pakistan. Say that talks may restart only after power is transferred to the next two civilian governments without military interference. In Pakistan, organising elections strengthens democratic forces. Top-level visits to Pakistan should be shunned, but people on pilgrimages should not be prevented from coming to India.

Two, the Indian embassy in Pakistan is practically an enclave, with diplomats having virtually no freedom to move around. The time has come to downgrade its status, retaining only nominal staff. Pakistanis should go to Kabul for a visa. But prepare a roster of some 500 Pakistani journalists, pro-democracy activists, musicians, actors and designers so as to give them visa on arrival. It is shameful that a Pakistani woman married to an Indian should be locked up for overstaying her visa. India must be efficient and stay open.

Three, India must declare that bilateral relations will resume after Pakistan amends its constitution to strengthen its civil society. The three litmus tests for Pakistan would be: to allow all Pakistani citizens,

including Hindus and Christians, to become head of state; to abolish death penalty in blasphemy laws; and to quash the law designating Ahmadis as non-Muslims. These difficult reforms will bolster Pakistan's democratic forces. Let some cry "interference".

Four, India must create a fund to establish news websites focused on Pakistan and to be edited by Pakistani citizen journalists. More and more information is a cure for the collective ills for modern times. Pakistani youth need information about their ground realities. Pakistan's NGOs, mainly those led by women, also need support. The Cold War taught us that internal movements can be aided by external factors. If India spends \$1.2 billion in Afghanistan, it should do this too.

Five, if Islamabad were to allow Indian trucks to travel to Afghanistan and Pakistani trucks to Central Asia, Pakistani economy will boom, creating enormous opportunities. But Pakistan does not care for its people's well-being. It wants to do business only with Arabs and the Chinese. Pakistan must be left to salvage its economic mess or stagnate, rot and collapse. However, Pakistani markets should be flooded with Indian textbooks on need-blind subjects like philosophy, social sciences, and Bollywood movies; these will broaden minds and undermine jihadism.

Six, the people of Balochistan are trampled by the Pakistani army, with thousands of Balochis kidnapped by its spy agencies. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has dubbed the agencies as "death squads". The Indian parliament should enact a humanitarian law, authorising the government to aid the Balochis. India must evolve a multilateral response on Balochistan. Pakistan has nuclear weapons; so it is necessary to have a second-strike capability ready. China should not worry us; its economic miracle is fading.

Seven, Kashmir was divided in 1947, but Pakistan's reliance on Islamism leads it to believe that all Muslim areas of India, notably Hyderabad, belong to it. Pakistan must clarify under what legal status its troops are in "Azad" Kashmir. To Kashmiri Islamists, reject demand for another Pakistan. With the patience of a Buddhist monk, India must cultivate greater freedoms, civic initiatives and regular panchayat elections to build a sustainable democratic infrastructure in Jammu & Kashmir. Sometimes a people's destiny is shaped when some leaders are gone.

Eight, India should communicate to Pakistan directly, stressing friendship with the people, not with their government, and arguing that the 10-year freeze in talks is because the Pakistani regime is unaccountable to its own people on matters of governance and jihadi

groups. Let Pakistanis realise that it is their military, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and jihadi organisations that run their government. How the West deals with Cuba and North Korea is worth learning.

Nine, former Pakistani soldier and Taliban commander Adnan Rasheed has admitted that the jihadi group Jaish-e-Muhammad, or JeM, is a subunit of the ISI, describing its members as “soldiers without uniform”. He has also said that the JeM, like Lashkar-e-Taiba, reports to the ISI. In 2011, United States military chief Admiral Mike Mullen described the Taliban as the ISI’s “veritable arm”. It is time a covert war to eliminate overground jihadi leaders was launched; this will benefit Pakistanis. Americans might offer their help.

Ten, peaceniks Mani Shankar Aiyar and Mahesh Bhatt favour talks with Pakistan; their intentions are pure and their ideas were tested. The ISI, the arbiter of Pakistan’s foreign relations, is proactive unlike India which has not been so for 3,000 years even in the face of invasions. As a result, rising India is isolated in its neighbourhood and is irrelevant in the Middle East, which is home to a large number of its expatriate population. India, a reluctant interventionist in international affairs, must gulp a notion of hard power. India needs to be proactive; cultural diplomacy is not enough. With Pakistan, India must act as an adversary.

Optimists say that Nawaz Sharif is sincere and hence he should be given a chance. He deserves nothing: his government is creating a counterterrorism task force which will be trained – Pakistan’s *Dunya News* reported on August 2 – by the ISI, the lead sponsor of terrorism. “Hysterical optimism will prevail until the world again admits the existence of tragedy,” wrote Richard M. Weaver in *Ideas Have Consequences*; the tragedy’s name is ISI. The ISI favours jihad; it fears democracy and it is worried that talks with India could undermine the global jihadi mission incumbent upon Pakistan as the sole state created for Islam. Post-2014, Pakistan will have surplus terrorists to work for it. The Indian Army has a million-plus soldiers; it is not to be expected that Chinese and Pakistani invaders who step on Indian soil or kill our soldiers return without a hurt foot.

## Pakistan's Deadly Double Game

Following the July 27 terror attacks in Gurdaspur district of Punjab, former counterterrorism expert and supercop KPS Gill said: "We need to keep Pakistan aside – now, the attention should actually be on ISIS. I feel Pakistan's state is subservient to ISIS – and the terror attacks in Punjab have undoubtedly been carried out by ISIS."

At around the time policemen in Gurdaspur were battling the terrorists, American journalist Sara A Carter was in possession of a 32-page Urdu document supposedly from the Islamic State. Reviewing it, she wrote: "(ISIS) has grand ambitions of building a new terrorist army in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and triggering a war in India to provoke an Armageddon-like 'end of the world'". Without disrespect to KPS Gill for his extraordinary counterterrorism service in the 1980s, it needs to be said that his argument just does not hold water. Interpretations by both Gill and Carter are erroneous, but India does face a darker threat.

To grasp the emerging threat to India, return to the evening of December 1, 2009. Speaking at the US Military Academy at West Point, Barack Obama, still in the first year of presidency, unveiled his military strategy for Afghanistan. Obama announced the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops in that country, but he spoke of "conclusion", "an end to this era of war", "to end this war", "to hasten the day when our troops will leave", "to begin the transfer of our forces out of Afghanistan in July of 2011", and so on. It was decided that after a period of transition, US and NATO troops would withdraw by 2014-end, transferring full responsibility to the Afghan security forces. In fact, it is the post-2014 strategy of the Taliban and their sponsor-state, Pakistan, that is beginning to materialise now.

In an article in *USA Today*, Carter wrote that the document belonged to the Islamic State, but this claim is not true. There are reasons to believe that it has been authored by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which for all ideological and practical purposes is a

jihadist organisation. One, ISIS is not in the practice of delivering its publications to journalists. Two, jihadist groups publish their audio, video and text documents on jihadist forums on the Internet and circulate them via social media. In the present case this document did not originate via these means.

Three, Carter admits that the document was obtained from someone inside Pakistan, which means that someone with a larger interest wanted to ensure its publication in the Western media. Four, Carter says the document came from "a Pakistani citizen with connections inside the Pakistani Taliban", which means it is not from ISIS, as it is the ISI not ISIS that has deeper roots among the Taliban factions. Five, senior jihadist media analyst Marwan Khayat, who monitors ISIS-related media sources on a daily basis at the Washington-based Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), says: "I find it very unlikely that ISIS suddenly is talking about causing Armageddon in India when in fact it rarely mentions India or its plans for India in its official publications."

Also, Carter got the document "reviewed by three US intelligence officials, who said they believe the document is authentic based on its unique markings". This intelligence assessment means nothing because jihadist groups, except for their logos, use an identical language, sourcing content from the Quran, Hadiths (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) and early Islamic literature. There is an additional reason to believe that Carter's narrative was planted by someone. The US media, taking a cue from the White House, have continued to teach Americans in recent years that the Haqqani Network and the Afghan Taliban are separate entities. This narrative has been bolstered by leading American newspapers despite the Afghan Taliban issuing several contrary statements, which have been compiled by MEMRI over the years.

In November 2011, Sirajuddin Haqqani refuted US media reports, saying: "We follow the directives of the [Taliban] shura in planning and financial matters. In such a situation, there is no question of running a separate organisation, group, or entity [from the Islamic Emirate led by Mullah Mohammad Omar]." A year later, as American newspapers continued to parrot that the Haqqani Network and Afghan Taliban are different, Sirajuddin Haqqani issued another statement in September 2012: "We follow the Emir-ul-Momineen [Mullah Omar] in the framework of Islam, without seeking status or material gain. This is enough to assure the world that our organisational affairs are completely controlled and run by the Islamic Emirate."



On September 22, 2011, Admiral Mike Mullen, the then chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee: "The Haqqani network acts as a veritable arm of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency." Mullen's and Haqqani's statements confirm that the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network are the same and are part of the ISI.

This Pakistani policy of using jihadist groups has been under way since 1947. In her book *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*, US academic C Christine Fair writes: "Pakistan's efforts to employ political Islamists, and later Islamist militants in Afghanistan, began as early as the late 1950s." Pakistan's use of jihadists in Kashmir in 1947-48 is well known to Indian readers. The use of jihadists was boosted by a strategy of infiltration, as argued by Brigadier AAK Niazi, who had served on the Burma front during World War II and would surrender in Dhaka in 1971. Fair quotes Niazi as writing in 1964: "Infiltration implies bypassing of enemy posts by relatively small parties which penetrate deep and unseen into the defences and converge at a pre-designated objective"; and infiltration "will achieve much better results with far lesser casualties than any other form of attack." Over half a century since Niazi wrote these words, India has been dealing with infiltration of Pakistani jihadists in Jammu & Kashmir almost every week.

The Pakistani state's strategy of using jihadists in Afghanistan, Balochistan and India has always been consistent. It is executed by the ISI. While some groups like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), inspired ideologically by jihad, have followed an independent path recently, most jihadist organisations still serve as the ISI's branches: the Afghan Taliban including the Haqqani Network; Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab led by Asmatullah Muawiya; Jaish-e-Muhammad under Maulana Masood Azhar, who was freed by India in exchange for passengers of the hijacked Indian Airlines plane IC-814 in 1999; Lashkar-e-Taiba functioning as Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation under Hafiz Muhammad Saeed; Hizbul Mujahideen and a number of jihadist groups led by Syed Salahuddin; Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, which specialises in anti-Shia killings, especially in Balochistan, and whose members were the first to migrate to Syria to work under Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

The ISI's post-2014 strategy is unfolding several ways. First, on May 19, it emerged that the ISI had signed an agreement with the Afghan spy agency National Directorate of Security, or NDS. The agreement's objectives included changing the Pakistan narrative in Afghanistan and, importantly, allowing "joint training and sharing of expertise and experiences", which meant the ISI could get its agents into the NDS.

Second, the timing of the announcement of Mullah Omar's death is interesting, as it seems that the ISI could not figure out what to do in the emerging regional situation. Interestingly, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's website noted that Mullah Omar "died in April 2013 in Pakistan". But the Taliban website, so as to give a clean chit to the ISI, wrote: Omar "continued to live in Afghanistan and in the previous fourteen years never for a single day did he leave Afghanistan to visit Pakistan".

Third, a video of nearly a dozen armed Kashmiri youths shot in a forest has appeared. There is a rise in the number of Kashmiris joining Pakistan-sponsored militancy in Kashmir. Speaking on the Kargil Vijay Diwas – the anniversary of India's victory on July 26, 1999, in the Kargil war, arguably the largest jihadist war against India in recent memory – Lt.-General DS Hooda, the chief of Northern Command, said that more Kashmiris were joining militancy now. He said: "[In 2014], about 60 local recruits, mostly from south Kashmir, and this year, about 30-35 is the figure that we have [of youths joining militancy].... It is a matter of concern when young people have now slowly again started picking up the gun because two-three years back, the numbers were single digit – five, six or seven."

Fourth, the July 27 attacks in Gurdaspur are an attempt to take the jihadist war out of Kashmir to the rest of India. The ISI has tried to implement this strategy in the recent years through the Indian Mujahideen, which has been contained for now.

Fifth, the document Carter got hold of is alleged to be belonging to ISIS, but it is not. It is an ISI document especially as it "seeks to unite dozens of factions of the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban into a single army of terror", as Carter noted. It must be mentioned here that the Afghan Taliban and ISIS loyalists are currently engaged in fighting against each other. In fact, the Taliban became so worried about ISIS loyalists advancing in some Afghan provinces that they wrote an open letter on June 15 to ISIS chief al-Baghdadi urging him not to intervene in Afghanistan. "We already face many conspiracies from the *kuffar* [infidels]; your supporters should do nothing that will break up the mujahideen's power," it said.

It is not ISIS but the ISI that is seeking to unite all Taliban factions and have them incorporated into the Afghan government through staged talks. The ISI tried this strategy on April 16, 2011, when a delegation of "all" top Pakistani leaders visiting Kabul demanded that Pakistani nationals be appointed in Afghan government institutions as it was done during the 1990s. Some of these jihadist groups will be used against India in the coming years.

Before Carter, another US journalist who fell to the ISI-engineered narrative is Seymour M Hersh, who, in an article on May 21 in the *London Review of Books*, sought to give a clean chit to the ISI by observing that it had helped the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reach Osama bin Laden. In other words, his argument was that the Pakistan Army was not responsible for hiding the al-Qaeda leader in Abbottabad. The ISI goes to great lengths to evolve its own narrative, one of the most recent attempts being to develop a plot in Burdwan district of West Bengal to have Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's assassination executed from terrorists coming from Indian soil so that India stops blaming Pakistan for the 2008 attacks on Mumbai.

Sixth, Pakistan is engaged in a military operation called Zarb-e-Azb (Strike of the Prophet's Sword) in North Waziristan against various militant groups, which it uses to hoodwink international public opinion. The timing of the operation is important. Since the suicide bombing at CIA's base in Khost on December 30, 2009, Pakistan has withstood all US pressure to act against the jihadists' stronghold in North Waziristan. Sometime in the mid-2010s, it looked real that the US could fire drones into North Waziristan. It worried the ISI so much that it moved the Afghan Taliban commanders, especially the Haqqanis, to a new sanctuary in Kurram Agency around September 2010. The ISI had adopted the same tactic in October 2009 by moving Mullah Mohammad Omar from Quetta in Balochistan to Karachi after it feared that some US drones could be diverted to kill him.

Last year, as the ISI achieved clarity on its post-2014 strategy, the Pakistan Army finally launched Zarb-e-Azb apparently to fight against ideologically motivated groups like TTP and co-opt more members from TTP who were willing to join the ISI's network. The first indication of this strategy emerged in September 2014 when the ISI co-opted Asmatullah Muawiya, the Punjabi Taliban chief. Muawiya split from the TTP to join the ISI, saying: "We took this step in the larger interest of Islam and the [Pakistani] nation." Some TTP commanders like Khan Saeed Sajna fell in line. In August 2014, journalist Kahar Zalmay wrote that the ISI engaged Sirajuddin Haqqani to get Taliban commander Hafiz Gul Bahadur into its arm. Non-compliant jihadists are removed; most recently on July 28 Lashkar-e-Jhangvi chief Malik Ishaq was killed in a staged police encounter as he apparently was not cooperating with the ISI and was ideologically inclined to join ISIS.

Christine Fair writes that she was told by a former Pakistani army chief that "Pakistan's generals would always prefer to take a calculated risk and be defeated than to do nothing at all". In the recent past,

Pakistan tried to implement the Palestinian intifada strategy in Kashmir, using stone-throwing as a means of protest. This was a continuation from the 1980s, when the ISI emerged victorious in the Afghan jihad and planned a mayhem in Kashmir during the 1990s. After the 9/11 attacks delegitimised the Kashmir jihad, the ISI created the Indian Mujahideen to take the fight to the heart of India. When President Obama was delivering his speech in 2009 at Cairo University, the ISI was planning its post-2014 strategy.

Even in the run-up to the US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014, the ISI had been lining up anti-India jihadists. In October 2012, jihadist leader Fazlur Rehman Khalil, who founded the Harkatul Jihad al-Islami and is now chief of Ansarul Ummah which runs from a mosque in Rawalpindi, the headquarters of the Pakistan Army, warned: "Kashmir jihad will resurge" like the Arab Spring. In March 2013, Mushtaq Zargar, one of three terrorists freed by India in the 1999 hijacking of IC-814, emerged from over a decade of hiding, warning: "We still run [jihadist] training centres on both sides of the LoC [Line Of Control]: Nothing has changed on the ground"; and "India must remember that the US has been defeated in Afghanistan.... India will see what we are capable of."

On January 26, 2014, Masood Azhar addressed a conference in Muzaffarabad in memory of Afzal Guru, who was hanged for his role in the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. In September 2014, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), which, much like Jaish-e-Muhammad, is the ISI's arm against India. Also, last month, Hafiz Saeed was recruiting potential youths in Syria, in Myanmarese refugee camps in Indonesia, and among Palestinians in Gaza. By August 2015, the ISI would be in total control of the following: Afghan Taliban including the so-called Haqqani Network; Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab; Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, also functioning as Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat; AQIS; Jaish-e-Muhammad; Harkatul Mujahideen; and Lashkar-e-Taiba. India faces a jihadist threat from these state-backed actors. Pakistan views itself to be in a civilisational struggle against India. Fair says the Pakistani "army has long seen itself as the protector of Pakistan's Islamic ideology and has come to frame its conflict with India in civilisational terms". She adds, "Pakistan's army will insist on action at almost any cost, even that of presiding over a hollow state."

Carter is right in one sense: someone is planning an Armageddon in India. As a society, India faces real threat from home-grown jihadists. Indeed, ISIS is a threat, but it would not come from the

Pakistani state, at least not as yet. The problem with radicalisation is that it could exploit the fault lines in Indian society: corruption in the police and judicial establishments, and the yawning gap between the rich and the poor.

# Pakistan's Continuing War Against Indian Civilisation

Over thirteen centuries ago, in 712 CE, an external force made an incursion into Indian civilisation. For the next thousand years, Indian people accommodated it in different ways. In 1947, they came to believe they could buy permanent peace with it by giving away a piece of our territory, thereby creating Pakistan. Once again in 2015, political analysts, acting on behalf of this external force, have convinced us and our government that we must buy peace. On July 10 in Ufa, Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised to ride a peace plane to Pakistan next year.

Speaking of planes, our media has been teaching Indian youth since 1999 that the Indian Airlines plane IC814 was hijacked to Kandahar that year by terrorists. This is contrary to facts. The plane was hijacked by the Pakistani state to bargain for the release of Maulana Masood Azhar, the chief of Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) imprisoned by India in Kashmir. This jihadist organisation is a branch of the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI. In interviews, three terrorist commanders have testified that the JeM is part of the ISI.

On June 25, Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) released an interview of Adam Gadhan, the American spokesman of al-Qaeda killed in a drone strike in Waziristan this year. Gadhan shed fresh light on the Pakistani state's support to JeM. For his final trip to Pakistan in late 1998, Gadhan stayed at Kuwait Hostel of the Islamic International University in Islamabad. From the Kuwait Hostel, Gadhan said he was picked up by "two Pakistani brothers" who "told me they were from the group headed by Maulana Masood Azhar, who was still in an Indian prison." Jaish-e-Muhammad, along with Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), is the lead group fighting in Kashmir. Two more interviews of Adnan Rasheed and Shamsh Kashmiri establish that JeM is a branch of the ISI. Shamsh Kashmiri, a former JeM deputy chief, revealed last year that when Pervez Musharraf 'shut down' offices of jihadist groups under global

pressure, Ashfaq Kayani, then ISI chief, raised salaries for JeM, LeT, Hizbul Mujahideen and others. Kayani was elevated to the post of army chief by Musharraf on whose watch 26/11 attacks were planned.

Adnan Rasheed, a commander with the Pakistani Taliban, revealed in 2013 that as a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) staff he was sent to a JeM training camp where he realised: "We are soldiers in uniform" and JeM members "are soldiers without uniform"; "we follow them and they take instruction from our institution – the ISI." Adnan also revealed that he was part of a unit in the PAF called Idarat-ul-Pakistan (the Institution of Pakistan), whose stated objective was to create a jihadist network across the Pakistani armed forces. AQIS is its new offshoot.

The worry is that Pakistan continues to support the JeM chief Maulana Masood Azhar, much as it protected Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and Mullah Mohammad Omar and protects Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, and others. Al-Qalam is an Urdu-language jihadist weekly sold across Pakistan, published by the JeM's Al-Rehmat Trust. In a July 14 report, Al-Qalam celebrated "two weeks of success by Jaish-e-Muhammad mujahideen" in Nowgam sector in Kashmir. The external force that arrived under Muhammad bin Qasim is now led by the JeM-ISI combine.

In Kashmir, it is testing India's spirit for coexistence. During July 1-19, Pakistani troops violated ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir for 11 times and ISI-backed terrorists from Jaish-e-Muhammad and LeT fought against Indian troops. On July 13, Pakistani national Mohammad Anwar of LeT was killed in Poonch district. On July 3-4, five militants were killed in Uri sector. There are recurring cases of incursions and militant attacks. A private website must compile the list of Indian soldiers being killed by Pakistan in this manner.

A divided Punjab is acceptable to this force but a division of Kashmir isn't because it is a Muslim-majority region. Lead organisations fighting against the Indian civilisation are: Pakistani military, LeT, JeM and Indian Mujahideen, the last three backed by the first. This singular force also aided non-Muslim proxies like pro-Khalistan terrorists who should ideally be fighting to take back Lahore as their capital instead of fighting against India. This is the force that shot Malala Yousafzai, who is an Indian; Pakistani is not an identity; the identity is only Indian. Former PAF chief Asghar Khan has testified that all wars with India were initiated by Pakistan.

To this external force, peace is unacceptable; peace is merely a tactic. The historic peace bus to Lahore by AB Vajpayee led to Kargil war in 1999. When Musharraf was talking, terrorists were trained to

attack Mumbai. When Nawaz Sharif was talking of talks, India's consulate in Jalalabad was attacked in August 2013. Trust talks of peace with this external force after Pakistan amends its constitution allowing non-Muslim Pakistani citizens to become head of the state.

Countries like Pakistan that do not allow their non-Muslim citizens to become the head of state are the anti-thesis of Indian civilisation and Malala Yousafzai. The jihadism in Kashmir is their continuing war against Indian civilisation. This writer was questioned on Twitter for arguing that teaching India's history could undercut Islamic extremism. The argument remains: this external force subverts the process of India's history; Multan was a Hindu city, Lahore a Sikh metropolis. Teaching our kids that we all are Harappans will indeed aid Islamic reformation in India.

Actor Salman Khan, holding a torch of hope in his new movie *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* in which he helps a lost mute girl return home in Pakistan, tweeted that Modi and Sharif should watch the film "because love for children is above all boundaries." Khan the Bajrangi is indeed the impulse of Indian civilisation; the Pakistani identity is an interim construct; the identity, the civilisational impulse, remains Indian. Today's jihadism is external to Indian civilisation. Attempts to buy peace with this force must be discouraged, more so since the Syria-based Islamic State has already made an incursion into India, like Muhammad bin Qasim led Iraqi and Syrian fighters to India.



## Question America's Pakistan Policy

**D**ays before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival in Washington last week, the United States announced its decision to give 160 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAPs) vehicles worth \$198 million to Pakistan. According to a statement, the sale "will contribute to the foreign policy" of the US. The decision is part of a larger US plan to hand over military hardware from Afghanistan to the Pakistan Army. It also reveals the deceptive American argument that selling F-16s and other war-fighting weapons to Pakistan is meant to fight militants. Husain Haqqani, the former Pakistani ambassador and an astute thought leader of South Asia, has described this American thinking as delusional.

India should call this bluff for the following reason: the US foreign policy hampers India's interests and its efforts to shape South Asia. Diplomacy is relevant when and where it matters the most. The move to sell MRAPs is timed with Modi's Washington visit. India must openly debate the US relationship with Pakistan. Also, the Indian media needs to sharpen their focus on how the US' Pakistan policy undermines India in its neighbourhood. The US' counterterrorism policy on Afghanistan has been flawed throughout because of it overlooking the Pakistani role, except perhaps when George W. Bush ordered the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to stop sharing intelligence with Islamabad in 2008 and develop a parallel network of human intelligence in the Pakistani tribal region.

Bush's move followed the realisation that the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was protecting jihadists in Waziristan despite actionable intelligence. Soon after its creation in 1947, Pakistan began a policy of using jihadists from the Pashtun-dominated north-west region to advance its external policies. The north-west region has been a hotbed of jihadists from the colonial times. In 1947-48, the newly created Pakistan used jihadists to invade Jammu & Kashmir and

Balochistan. The use of jihadists continued through all its wars with India and in peace time, as well as against its own people in Bangladesh. Its use of jihadists in the Kargil war was comprehensive.

In Pakistan, the final arbiter of its foreign policy, especially with regard to Afghanistan, the US and India, is the ISI, which views itself as the ideological guardian of the Islamic state. In theory, the ISI chief reports to the civilian government, but in practice he answers only to the army chief. The ISI is known for birthing, nurturing and shepherding jihadist groups to advance Pakistan's foreign policy objectives. Ideologically, both the ISI and al-Qaeda stand for the establishment of a global Islamic caliphate, the only difference being that the ISI wants Pakistan, being the first state created singularly for Islam, to be the leader of that caliphate.

In military strategy, generals do not write an exit plan before war; at least they do not announce to the enemy when they intend to wrap up the war. However, President Barack Obama's advance announcement to withdraw troops from Afghanistan by 2014-end has activated ISI strategists to think beyond 2014. As the US exit from Afghanistan approaches, the ISI's policy of using jihadist outfits after 2014 is beginning to emerge. There are also clear evidences that al-Qaeda is indeed a branch of the Pakistani military.

Consider these three points. One, advancing essentially the ISI's post-2014 strategy, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri has announced the establishment of "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent" – a terror unit that is succeeding in recruiting Indian Muslims. Two, Asmatullah Muawiya, the chief of Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab, recently announced that he would abandon fighting. But contrary to the media's interpretations, his decision only means that he will fight in Afghanistan and against Indian interests while abandoning attacks "within" Pakistan. Three, reports indicate that the Punjabi Taliban will now assist the Haqqani Network, the ISI's long arm destabilising Afghanistan.

Perhaps rooted in Ashoka's renunciation of violence, Indian intellectual thought refrains from taking positions on global issues. In 2011, India abstained from a vote on a United Nations resolution that permitted a no-fly zone over Libya. In July, to gain equivalence on the multilateral track, India voted against Israel – in favour of a UN resolution that avoided mentioning the jihadist group, Hamas. As advised by Indian diplomats influenced by Damascus, India has shied away from training some Iraqi policemen let alone send troops there for the fear that Indian expatriate workers could be affected. Indian

diplomacy is cultivated to be intellectually timid, to hide behind non-alignment and lacks a conception of India's place in the world.

In the 4th century BCE, Kautilya offered, reminds Henry Kissinger in his new book *World Order*, “a vision of how to establish and guard a state while neutralising, subverting, and (when opportune conditions have been established) conquering its neighbours”. Now, military generals who mock some of the Indian state's Kautilyan practices have become ministers. It is also doubtful if India would have intervened in East Pakistan but – as Kissinger notes – for “the protection of a freshly signed Soviet defence treaty”. A few years ago, strategists in Delhi called for Nonalignment 2.0, which anchors Indian thought in the Soviet era. In 2012, writing about Nonalignment 2.0, then Air Vice Marshal Arjun Subramaniam observed thus: Being “restrained is a demonstration of the 'idea of India’”. India's restraint is a diplomatic mental block.

On September 21, *The Washington Post* warned that Pakistan “is advancing toward a sea-based missile capability and expanding its interest in tactical nuclear warheads”. A nation that cannot make train engines produces cruise missiles and nuclear bombs. It is time the US was told that Pakistani's jihadist military is bankrolled by American money. The Zarb-e-Azb operation, a military offensive launched against militants in North Waziristan, was orchestrated to have US funds blocked by it released to the Pakistan Army. The sale of MRAPs appears small, but it reveals the US diplomatic mindset that consistently undermines India. This is a point Indian diplomats are yet to comprehend. If the US expects India to be a natural ally, New Delhi must realise that blunt talking and brinkmanship are established tenets of international diplomacy. In any India-US dialogue, America's Pakistan policy must be on the agenda.



# **SECTION VI**

Muslims in Indian  
Democracy



# Urdu Media Fanning Minority Fears

**O**f all categories of people in society, journalists are appreciated for their supposed capability to perceive the intended meanings of words and the societal context in which they are understood by common readers. Shahid Siddiqui is the chief editor and owner of *Nai Duniya*, an Urdu newspaper that has been read by Indian Muslims for over 41 years. As editor, Siddiqui decides what goes in the weekly newspaper, and which articles, images and headlines get published. Since it is generally accepted that Muslims have low literacy levels and cannot evolve enlightened responses to emerging issues, it is reasonable to expect Siddiqui's newspaper to show a positive path for Indian Muslims.

As a schoolgoing youth in the 1980s, this writer has watched Siddiqui's newspaper arrive regularly in bookstalls at railway stations, with cover pages that would leap to the eye with messages such as: Islam is in danger; Muslims are under siege; the West is hunting Muslims; and Jews are evil. It has not changed yet. A review of the digital issues of *Nai Duniya* over the past few years indicates that Siddiqui sells siege mentality, conspiracy theories and mass fears to unsuspecting Muslims. For instance, the magazine's current issue has on its cover an image of a Muslim girl crying with folded hands as numerous arrows are unleashed at her face and a menacing man lurches forward to harm her; the headline reads: "Why is the whole world the enemy of Muslims?"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an extraordinary effort to tell the world that al-Qaeda was delusional to think it could attract Indian Muslims. Modi's statement was brave amid reports of some Indian Muslims joining jihadists in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. However, in the current issue of *Nai Duniya*, Siddiqui questions Modi's effort: "Muslim lives for India, dies for India – Modi's statement: how much truth, how much politics?" There is no gainsaying that it is journalistic

duty to question politicians' statements, but headlines reflect an editor's mind. Sample these in Siddiqui's paper: "If he got power, what will Modi become – Akbar or Hitler"; "To occupy India, the Hindu card by Modi and Rajnath – from the pen of Shahid Siddiqui"; "Modi [rubs] salt on the wounds of Muslims"; "To install Modi as prime minister, RSS's 'antakwadi [terror] plan' – special investigative report"; "Who will become the prime minister – feku or pappu"; and "Sex CD made – Noose around Modi's neck? 'Sahab' should tell what was after all his relationship with this girl?"

In the worldview that Siddiqui injects into the Muslim consciousness, reformist writer Taslima Nasreen and distinguished litterateur Salman Rushdie are portrayed thus: "Satan's daughter [Taslima Nasreen] – how long will she have fun on the Indian soil"; "On the back of Satan [Salman Rushdie], the Congress' hand"; and "The attack of Satan [Salman Rushdie] on Muslims and Imran [Khan of Pakistan]". While legitimate criticisms of Israel and its occupation of Palestinian land must be welcomed, Siddiqui does not differentiate between Jews and Israel as his mind is clouded by the tide of global antisemitism. Cover page headlines read: "Before attack on Iran, the Jewish conspiracy to have the Islamic world fight against the whole world"; and "The Jews' satanic propaganda in America – Muslims [are] animal; the world of Islam stunned by ad campaign in New York", the latter referring to an advertisement given by a pro-Israel group urging people to defeat jihad.

Of all Western leaders, Barack Obama has gone out of his way to forge goodwill with Muslims, delivering an address in Cairo, urging the *National Aeronautics and Space Administration* (NASA) to help Muslim scientists, opening negotiations with Iran, releasing prisoners from the Guantanamo Bay detention centre. However, Siddiqui's newspaper blamed him for backing anti-Islam forces like pastor Terry Jones, who gained notoriety for his plan to burn the Quran. A cover page headline in *Nai Duniya* has "Obama on the back of the Satan blaspheming the Quran" with the strapline, "In order to win elections for the second time, American president Obama is proving himself a fanatical Christian and is encouraging Islam-enemy elements such as Terry Jones."

Siddiqui also accused Obama of planning a nuclear attack on Mecca. "At the hint of American president's finger – atom bomb on the House of Kaaba; *Nai Duniya* had presented this truth before the world four months ago," screams a headline. Another says: "Drop atom bomb on the House of Kaaba – the beginning of a new Crusade war in



America.” Yet another cover has a Dracula-like image of Obama with the headline: “America’s war against Islam – Obama’s filthy face unmasked.”

Siddiqui exerts no ordinary influence in shaping the minds of Muslims. His newspaper not only damages the Muslim psyche for the long term but also harms India’s cohesion, the democratic ethos of the republic and national security interests. On the Kashmir issue, it carried this cover page headline: “Modiji! Let the jinn of 370 stay in the bottle.” In a cover page image, a single noose hangs around half the faces of Ajmal Kasab and Manmohan Singh as the headline reads: “Who after Kasab?” Similar headlines about terror threat to India read: “Indian Mujahideen – how much reality, how much fiction”; “Does Modi really have a [security] threat?”; “Ishrat’s blood will take revenge of all Muslim youths”; “Muslim youths – terrorists or targets of terror?” An article which juxtaposes Muslims against India is titled: “Hyderabad blasts – Hindustan or Muslims in terror.” (Article 370 of the Indian constitution grants special autonomous status to Jammu & Kashmir, which Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party wants abrogated in the long run. Ajmal Kasab is the lone Pakistani terrorist of the Mumbai attacks in 2008 who was captured; he was later executed by India. Ishrat Jahan, 19, was a young girl who was killed along with three men in an alleged fake encounter by the Gujarat Police in June 2014.)

In its issue of November 18-24, 2013, *Nai Duniya* insinuated that even Pakistan wanted Modi as the prime minister. “Does Pakistan also want that Modi become prime minister,” reads the heading. The strapline reads: “The spy agencies of both the countries are playing a game to make Modi the prime minister – a special report by *Nai Duniya*”. The opening line of an article titled “Does the ISI want that Modi become India’s prime minister” goes like this: “Does IB [Intelligence Bureau] desire that he should sit on the country’s most powerful chair?” Siddiqui’s *Nai Duniya* is engaged in keeping Indian Muslims psychologically sick and while he should continue to publish in an atmosphere that allows the rights of the press to be free, the Indian government must order an inquiry into its four decades of reportage to find out what keeps Muslims alienated from the country’s mainstream.

## Articles of Faith or Apologia for Jihad?

India's leading Urdu language weekly newspaper *Haftroza Nai Duniya* published a special issue, dated May 25-31, 2015, on the current wave of jihadi terrorism in the Middle East and the global debate about its connection with Islam. It includes a series of articles, which argue that Islam is a peaceful religion and was not spread by the sword; that jihad is essentially defensive in nature; and that any wars involving Muslims have been owing to aggression on the part of non-Muslims – i.e. non-Muslims of Mecca in the era of the Prophet Muhammad and non-Muslim America and its allies in today's world. The issue justifies the massacre of hundreds of Jews, particularly the Banu Quraiza tribe, on Muhammad's orders.

The cover page shows an Islamic military general holding aloft a sword as he rides a horse under the shade of two white doves. The Urdu text declares: "*Nai Duniya's* special presentation – Terrorism and Islam number." It is a bit of an irony that though the newspaper argues that Islam did not spread by the sword, the sword figures in at least four illustrations in it. Some of the articles focus on jihadi terrorism, Quranic verses regarding jihad, the role of Hollywood and American television in facilitating American invasions in the Middle East, and the role of the Kharijites – a force similar to the Islamic State (formerly the ISIS) – which arose during the time of the Prophet and the first four caliphs who succeeded him. It also contains articles on the current wave of terrorism in Pakistan and the persecution of Rohingya Muslims by extremist Buddhists in Myanmar and diagnoses the singular cause behind the rise of terrorism in the world as the United States.

*Haftroza Nai Duniya*, published from Delhi, is widely read by Indian Muslims, especially in the country's northern states. It is a family-owned business; the paper is edited by Shahid Siddiqui, who inherited it from Maulana Abdul Waheed Siddiqui, an Islamic cleric. The weekly is known for publishing numerous articles and reports without disclosing the names of their authors, thereby evading individual responsibility for the articles that inject into the mass consciousness of Indian Muslims conspiracy theories against America and the West, mass religious orthodoxies, and obscurantism.

### *Conspiracy Theory*

The first article, "When will The Storm of Terrorism in Pakistan Stop?" is written in the context of the May 13 massacre of 45 Ismaili Shia Muslims in Karachi. It begins by defining Pakistan in these words: "The land of terrorism, the land of militancy, the land of extremism, the land of fear, the land of [intra-Islamic] doctrinal hatred, the land of religious frenzy, the land of anarchy and differences, the land of conflict, the land of civil war, the land of massacres, the land of ignorance, the land of insensitivity, the land of shamelessness, and the land of death."

The article criticises Pakistan over the continuing wave of terrorism in the country. "The tragedy is that the terrorists who are now calling themselves allies of ISIS are causing labels of ISIS to be attached to their attacks and murders, as if ISIS's arrival in Pakistan is a major event," it observes. It also notes that following the massacre of Ismaili Muslims in Karachi, nothing changed in Pakistan, adding: "[Pakistan's Islamic] green flag has become red [with murders].... The people are caught in the cage of helplessness. If Pakistan remains in this situation, its disintegration is inevitable."

The article notes that Pakistan blames two groups of terrorists: one which targets the police and the other which engages in sectarian killings of Shia Muslims. It explains: "The Karachi police have clarified that neither the Islamic State nor ISIS are in the city. In the past, this group had no name and there were no signs [of its presence]; now too, neither of these is present, and there is no evidence of it. However, some terrorist group or the other has been using the name of the Islamic State. Its objective is to create fear."

Pakistani terrorists are crying wolf, it says, adding that if ISIS were to really arrive in Pakistan, it would be the first to fight for survival, as has been the experience of Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria. It notes that many groups such as Jundallah and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are fighting for survival, and that Pakistani jihadis are extending their hands to ISIS in order to mount pressure on the Pakistani government.

Another article, titled "Pakistan Has Been Bartered for Osama's Death", is based on a recent report by US journalist Seymour Hersh, whose theory about the circumstances of the May 2011 killing in Abbottabad of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden by US Navy Seals has been rejected by Pakistan affairs experts.

In this article, *Haftroza Nai Duniya* puts forth several conspiracy theories involving the US; one is that American soldiers chopped bin Laden's body into pieces and threw it on the mountains of Afghanistan as they were returning from Abbottabad in May 2011. The US has said that his body was buried at sea. A second conspiracy theory states that the US staged the capture of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein: "Saddam Hussein was not captured in any basement in

Tikrit; rather a drama was enacted after his arrest in order to cause humiliation and disgrace [by depicting him as being] captured in a basement."

### **The Satanic Game to Defame Islam**

The weekly's lead article, "The Satanic Game to Defame Islam in the Name of Islamic Jihad", has the strapline "Islam and the Allegation – What Do the Intellectuals and Political Thinkers Say?" It begins thus: "A debate is stirred at the national and international level: Has Islam spread by the sword? Has Islam unfurled its flag in the world by the force of jihad and weapons?" It states that "a wave of fear" has spread among Indian Muslims after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in mid-2014 and that "anti-Muslim activities" by BJP's patron organisation, the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has increased.

This article, which is based on a report from the Indian magazine *Tehelka*, presents two arguments about the rise of jihadi groups in the Middle East. It compares this to the era of Crusades, when, it says, the Catholic Church wanted to spread its message and assert control over Jerusalem and surrounding Christian areas and the European countries launched a Holy War to stop the "violence-filled spread of Islam". The Crusades ended, it states, when Christianity restricted itself to Europe, and Islam's spread was restricted to the Arabs and did not cross Europe's borders. It further says, "That fighting [i.e. Crusades] may have ended, but its roots remained intact in some places. Keeping in mind this historical context, it can be said that the world is once again in this same situation – different religions are [fighting] face to face."

The article explains: "Islam's aggressive face is emerging before the world. However, unlike the Crusades, this conflict is not limited to Christianity and Islam. Among the mentality and ideologies that are developing, Islam is seen today in contrast with other religions and sects in the rest of the world. Within itself, Islam is in a [state of] conflict with different [sectarian and jihadi] ideologies. The mentality of 'Islamic terrorism' and 'extremism within Islam' has been ongoing for decades. Attacks are being carried out in Sydney. Attacks are occurring in India. Attacks are happening in Paris. Attacks are occurring in Bali, Indonesia. America is also its target. In fact, big attacks are occurring even in Islamic countries. There is a long list of terror attacks in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and all the Muslim countries. In such a situation, a question arises: Is the world at the crossroads of a religious war in addition to the Crusade war?"

Discussing the jihadi threat to India, the article notes: "Hindus and Muslims have been living here without any big confrontation. But here, too, terrorism has spread during the past two decades. Knowingly or unknowingly, India, with its war on terror, is in the group of [the allies

of] America, which is to a great extent the founder of today's terrorism. India has the world's second-largest population of Muslims. In recent days, local youths have been going to Syria to fight for ISIS-like organisations, which has caused a threat."

The article then raises a number of questions such as: Is this the result of weaknesses within the religion of Islam? Is violence embedded in the DNA of Islam, or is it the work of some ignorant individuals? Or, is it the result of the thinking of religious scholars who lack knowledge? And what are Indian Muslims, especially intellectuals and workers, thinking with regard to ways of tackling this violent ideology? In an attempt to answer these questions, the article quotes Indian Islamic theologian Maulana Wahiduddin Khan as saying: "In reality, a wrong interpretation of Islam was spread in the world and this interpretation began to be accepted as correct. However, this is totally wrong." A wrong interpretation of Islam, it states, was spread owing to the failure of religious organisations to present a correct picture.

Speaking about Islamic militancy, the article observes: "Militancy has two aspects. One meaning of Islamic militancy is to remain loyal to or to remain connected to the basic principles of the religion. The current era is of religious freedom. If a human being says that he will remain fully loyal to his religion, then there is no reason to question him. Such a person is merely using his right to religious freedom. However, if Islamic militancy is understood in its second meaning – of forcibly imposing it on others – then it is wrong. If a Muslim says that he will not compromise with others with regard to his religion and will impose his religion's teachings on others, such Islamic militancy contradicts not only the sentiment of Islam but its soul as well."

The article states that the second type of Islamic militancy has given birth to conditions which are called "Islamic terrorism". It says: "But the truth is that Islamic terrorism and Islam are opposites. There is no concept of terrorism in Islam. Islam is only the preacher of peace." The roots of Islamic terrorism, it says, are connected to 20th century Muslim thinkers who put forward the idea that Islam is a complete system of life, and political power is an essential part of it. It quotes Maulana Wahiduddin Khan as saying, "Those who gave a political interpretation of Islam tried to implement it in society as a political system, but found that the political office was already in the control of some other group." Noting that in order to remove such current rulers from power, violence was used by Muslim groups and "through the wrong interpretation of Islam, they were declared anti-Islam."

Editor-in-chief Shahid Siddiqui is introduced in the article as a "credible journalist and intellectual" who expresses despair as well as hope about the developments in the Islamic world: "One day, Muslims will understand the web woven around them and will be able to confront it." The article goes on to note that the clashes within Islam, especially those between Sunni and Shia Muslims, are not new: "This war is not new. It began some days after the time of the Prophet

Muhammad.... Looking at history, the truth is also that Islamic terrorism did not exist 20 years ago; when suicide bombs were being made in Sri Lanka, this was not happening in Islam." It attributes the rise of Islamic jihadi movements to the US because of its policies of arming Muslims to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan and of swaying Iraq to fight against Iran in the 1980s.

Making a case for Islamic reform, the article states: "As Muslims came under threat, they used the slogan of Islam being in danger. Along with that, they closed their doors to the outside world; as a result, change stopped coming [into Muslim societies]. In the entire world, Muslim thought is rotting, like stagnant water and air. It is now time to bring about change in Islam." It quotes the late Islamic scholar and India's first education minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as saying that a scholar of the Quran and Islam is like a doctor with several prescriptions for a single disease.

There are two types of jihad in Islam, it says: Jihad-e-Akbar (the great jihad), which is meant to bring change in oneself, and Jihad-e-Asghar (the small jihad, which is meant to take up weapons to defend oneself. Jihad is not intended for attacks, it says.

Arguing that Indian Muslims in general have not been attracted to jihad, whether in Kashmir or Afghanistan, it states that those who went to Syria to work with ISIS over the past year are a small minority. The article quotes Siddiqui as saying: "The day India is no longer secular, not only will Muslims be destroyed, but the entire country will be destroyed too." The article adds that if terrorism has spread, it has spread among Arabs, not in Islam.

Pakistani journalist Wusatullah Khan is also quoted in the article as asking why, if a handful of Islamic terrorists are defaming Islam, they are not expelled from Islam. Other arguments in the article include: "There are Hindu terrorists, but no Hindu terrorist has gone to Pakistan to this day. Jewish terrorists too were limited to Israel and Palestine. No Christian, Hindu or Jewish terrorist announced that he would breathe a sigh of relief only after making the entire world Hindu, Christian or Jewish."

### **Islam, Hollywood and America**

Another article titled "Did Islam Spread by the Force of the Sword?" observes: "There was no need for use of force to spread Islam, to impose it on the world." Muhammad, it says, began spreading Islam by inviting friends and relatives to accept it, which was followed up by inviting society at large to accept Islam; non-Muslims often embraced Islam simply by listening to Quranic verses. However, it adds: "Seeing the popularity of Islam, those who rejected Islam spread the lie that Islam spread by the sword and that in the region occupied by Muslim rulers, people were forced to accept Islam." The article then asks: "In such a situation, a question arises: If Islam spread by the sword, then where did

those who took up swords come from? Did they fall from the sky?" In Mecca, where Islam was first preached, the article says, the sword was in the hands of the enemies of Islam.

After arguing that Muslims did not take up swords in Mecca, the article asks: "Why did the need for wars emerge?" It notes that because of the growing mistreatment by the people of Mecca, Muslims were given permission to migrate to safer places such as Medina. "When the enemies of Islam did not allow them to live peacefully in Medina as well, and came there with their armies, then they were forced to take up the sword for their defence. They fought wars for their defence," the article says. It further notes that the Prophet Muhammad fought only two types of wars in self-defence: when a tribe launched a war on Medina (the wars of Badr, Uhah and Khandaq); and when it was clear that a certain tribe was preparing for war, such as the war of Khyber.

Noting that no ideology can be imposed on any group, the article goes on to say that in just a hundred years, Muslims emerged from the Arab world and marched to Persia, Central Asia, Africa, Europe and India, where they ruled, and it is believed that they would have imposed their religious ideology on local populations. However, the article rejects the argument that Islam was imposed on local populations, saying: "Most Muslim rulers had no deep relationship with Islamic ethics... and most of them were not interested in spreading Islam." The article goes on to attribute the spread of Islam to Sufi mystics. It adds: "Even today the sword of media is in the hands of the enemy forces of Islam", but nevertheless, by 2017, the followers of Islam will be greater in number than those of other religions, "which proves that the sword has not been used for spreading Islam but has been used [by Islam's enemies] for stopping its path."

Another article is titled "The So-called 'Islamic Terrorism' Has Been Born from the Womb of American Imperialism - An Organised Conspiracy from Hollywood to Television Serials." It begins by defining the role of the Hollywood film industry: "Character assassination [is] the world's most dangerous weapon... most dangerous power, and most dangerous propaganda. [It] can change the world's opinion in a flash, alter the mind, change the perspective, create a storm of hatred, and present someone before the world as Satan, an enemy of humanity, and a villain. Atop the list of those falling victims to this campaign are Muslims and Islam."

Stating that "Hollywood and television have played a big role in linking Islam and Muslims in the West to terrorism", the author writes: "Hollywood, deemed to be the film capital of the world, and American television have played a large-scale role in spreading hatred and poison against Islam and Muslims in the world, and have succeeded.... The most important question is whether this conspiracy is limited to Hollywood or represents the mentality of the film world or is part of the [American]

government's project to pave the path for its foreign policy, because it is only after such character assassination [takes place] that the Western powers can show their determination to be aggressive in the world. The problem is that the campaign by American television and Hollywood against Islam, Muslims and the Arab world impacts the entire world."

Noting that the world sees the charm of Hollywood as real, the article states: "From Hollywood to American television, after 9/11 roles portraying Muslims negatively have swelled in films and television serials [which works against] against Islam and the Arab world. Because of this, Muslims have become suspects in the entire world and are being targeted." It states: "Such propaganda mostly benefits the American government, since it becomes easy to launch military invasions in the Middle East, because Hollywood movies prepare public opinion to the effect that Arab countries or their leaders possess negative traits. Hollywood's mission against the Muslim world has now become clear." It argues that while Muslims are shown shedding the blood of women and children in the Arab world, American soldiers are presented as heroes to save humanity.

The article states: "In Western movies and television serials, the anti-Islam and anti-Muslim trend of films is old, but a new violence has emerged in them after the 9/11 attacks. Along with Hollywood, America's big television channels, including NBC, Fox, ABC and CBS, crossed all the limits [in the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims]. Arab-Americans and Muslim-Americans were presented as terrorists...." It concludes: "American serials and films are popular in nearly 150 countries. It is impacting the entire world. Suspicion, along with hatred and poison, is being created in the minds of people with regard to Islam and Muslims; this is gradually depicting Islam and Muslims as a threat."

### **The Business of Lies Against Islam**

Another article, "The Business Of Lies Against Islam - The Assumptions Levelled Against Islam Which Are Used To Defame The Prophet Muhammad And The Quran", begins by asking a number of questions, including: "Did Islam spread by the sword? Does Islam command the suppression of women? Does it command Muslims to take four wives and produce 40 children? Is Islam in clash with Judaism, Christianity and other religions? Does it command the launching of wars against non-Muslims and killing them?"

Citing the Quran as saying that "there is no compulsion in religion", the article argues that Islam did not spread by force, but that if there were any stray incidents when someone was converted by a Muslim ruler, that Muslim ruler should not be considered as a representative of Islam but rather a representative of power. It rejects the argument that Islam does not accord equal rights to Muslim women: "Islam has never said that women have fewer rights than men and cannot live their life as



they wish." Some Saudi and Taliban anti-women practices, it says, have bolstered the impression that Islam does not allow freedom for women.

With regard to the argument that Islam permits men to take four wives, the article says: "If you look around, you will hardly find a Muslim who has two wives.... You will not find the tradition of four marriages among Muslims in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, European countries or even in America." While polygamy does exist in Africa and in Arab societies, these, it states, relate to local practices, not to Islam. With regard to the argument that Islam commands the killing of *kafirs* (infidels), the article notes: "The enemies of Islam have spread this misunderstanding, that Islam has commanded the killing of kafirs, and that it has said to kill them wherever they are found."

Muslims, the article says, have protected Christian and Jewish minorities for centuries, because Islam is a religion of humanity. It also claims that the companions of the Prophet Muhammad protected the places of worship of Jews and Christians, though the article does not mention the argument that Islam only offers this protection when the said Christians and Jews accept Islamic rule.

While the Taliban demolished the statues of the Buddha in Afghanistan, and ISIS is now demolishing ancient worship places of non-Muslims in Syria and Iraq, it says, these groups cannot be accepted as the representatives of Islam. Additionally, the article states, suicide bombers in the Middle East are being described as "Islamic bombs" in order to defame Islam: "Terrorism and destruction have no connection to Islam, and the work of spreading this [impression] has been carried out mostly by America and its allies. The biggest role in nourishing al-Qaeda, the Taliban and ISIS is the one played by America and its allies." America, it says, called them "mujahideen" when they were fighting its war against the Soviets in Afghanistan; now it calls them terrorists because they have risen up against America.

### **The Koran's Jihad Verses**

One of the special articles, "Do the Koran's Jihadi Verses Motivate Muslims for Terrorism?" begins by asking: "[Is] Islam's duty of jihad the cause for the growth of terrorism? Is violence increasing in the world because of the directives of the Quran? Are those 24 verses of the Quran that discuss jihad responsible for the conflicts increasing among Muslims?"

After noting that jihadis are giving a wrong interpretation of Islam to mislead Muslim youths, the article argues that the Quran's verses regarding jihad are intended to establish peace in the world: "The Quran has indeed given the order for jihad; however, its purpose is not to spread lawlessness in the world but to liberate humanity from lawlessness. Its purpose is not violence, but to end violence."

Anti-Islam organisations in Europe and America, it says, as well as extremist Hindutva groups in India, are demanding that jihadi verses be removed from the Quran and that Muslim children not be taught them. It then goes on to reinterpret the verses and cites the following (translated here from Urdu version given in the article):

"And wage jihad in the path of Allah against those who fight you, but do not cross the limit; without doubt, Allah does not like those who cross the limit. And fight them where you find them and expel them from where they expelled you (Chapter Baqra, Verses 189-190)."

"And those who embraced faith and migrated and waged jihad in the path of Allah with their lives and wealth, their status before Allah is high. (Chapter Tauba, Verse 20)."

"And how the polytheists fight you, wage jihad against them in a similar manner. And remember, Allah is without doubt with those who are pious (Chapter Tauba, Verse 36)."

"The Momin [i.e. faithful Muslim] is he who has accepted Allah and his Prophet, and who then did not doubt and waged jihad in the way of Allah with his life and wealth... (Chapter Hujurat, Verse 15)."

"O Believers, shouldn't I tell you about the business that will save you from dreadful punishment; keep faith in Allah and his Prophet, and wage jihad in the path of Allah with your life and wealth... (Chapter Saff, Verses 10-11)."

"Those against whom the kafirs fought were given permission [to wage jihad], and this permission is because they (the believers) are victims... (Chapter Hajj, Verses 39-40)."

"And fight against them until there is no mischief [i.e. non-Islamic practice] left and the entire religion becomes of Allah alone... (Chapter Anfal, Verse 39)."

The article states: "Read once again the translations of the above Quranic verses and comprehend them. Has it been said in any of the verses that Muslims commit atrocities, commit violence or cause damage to common people in the name of jihad? In the entire Quran, there is not a single verse ordering violence and atrocity." The article's key argument is that jihad is ordered in defence only when another nation threatens the life, property and honour of Muslims. It notes that there are different types of jihad, including reforming oneself, working for welfare, using the pen for good purposes, and so on.

Regarding "jihad by the sword", the article says that this form of jihad is not the duty of an individual but of the Islamic state when the lives and property of Muslims are in need of defence – and that this right is also granted by the United Nations. It asks: "What if America's existence were in danger? Won't it wage war?", and argues that Islam established rules of war long before the UN framed such rules. The article is a defence of Islam and the Quran but does not explain the rise of jihadis who quote Islamic scriptures, other than blaming the US and its allies for the current

wave of Islamic terrorism and the non-Muslims of Mecca for the Islamic wars during the era of the Prophet Muhammad.

### **The Kharijite Mischief**

An article is titled: "*The Beginning of Terrorism in The Name of Islam – The Kharijite Mischief.*" This article begins by arguing that Islam is a moderate religion but there are Muslims factions that have moved away from moderation, leaving Islamic teachings behind: "In different eras, groups among Muslims that were far removed from the Islamic path of moderation have appeared. They would talk of Islam, offer Islamic prayers, and, although they sported Islamic dress and appearance, were considered to have been expelled from Islam." These, the article says, were the Kharijites, who can be called terrorists.

"The Kharijite group emerged during the time of the Prophet himself. These people were ideologically militant and were far removed from moderation, and considered the [lovers of] militancy to be Muslim and momin [faithful Muslims]," the article says. It further states that such non-moderate ideologies are found among Muslims even today. Quoting Islamic jurist Imam Taimiyyah as saying that the Kharijites were not unique to the era of Islam's fourth caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib and would continue to emerge till the arrival of Dajjal – the Anti-Christ – it adds, "Although the Kharijites emerged during the Prophet's time, their ideas were spread during the era of [third Islamic caliph] Usman, and they launched armed rebellions during the rule of Hazrat Ali [the fourth caliph]."

According to the article, the Kharijites did not consider the fourth caliph Ali and his son Hasan to be Muslims, and Ali's assassin was a Kharijite. Defining the characteristics of the Kharijites, the article observes: "These people lived in jungles and prayed and fasted profusely, but deviated too far from the moderation of Islam." Today's Islamic terrorists too, it says, pray and appear to be sincere followers of Islam, but they have in fact rejected the moderate path, and the best example of these is ISIS. One group of Kharijites identified in the article was led by Hassan bin Sabah, who occupied a fort in Iran in the 11th century and had eminent Islamic scholars and officials murdered for not being Muslims according to his interpretation. It notes: "His beliefs were nearer to those of Ismaili Shias. According to historians, he declared rape and drinking *halal* [permissible in Islam]."

At the end of the 9th century, another group of Kharijites opposed to the Abbasid caliphate emerged. Known as the Qaramta group and led by Abu Tahir Suleiman, it, according to the article, "established its own government in some regions. This group used to engage in attacks and murders and would especially target Hajj pilgrims. They took the Black Stone from the Kaaba and it remained away from the House of Allah [i.e. the Kaaba] for nearly 20 years.

They broke the Black Stone, which even today is in pieces." The article states that the group's leader, Abu Tahir Suleiman, launched attacks on Mecca; in 930 CE, the Qaramta group carried out mass murders in Mecca, and earlier, in 900 CE, this group had carried out similar mass killings in the regions of Iraq and Syria, much like the atrocities committed today by ISIS.

### **Islam's Constitution – Compromise and War**

An article titled "Islam's Constitution – Compromise and War" has the strapline: "The religion of Islam preferred compromise over war." The article argues that Islam is a religion of peace in every aspect of life, and that if the need for war in self-defence emerges, it permits war with moderation. Noting that the Quran forbids excesses in life, the article states: "Since Islam's objective is not governance but the establishment of peace and construction of a society based on justice and humanity, it prefers compromise. It does not allow for war in any region whose people do not want war." It argues that if an act results in destruction, it cannot be called jihad, and while wars are fought to occupy the resources and land of other nations, Islamic wars were fought only in self-defence.

Islam, it says, does not allow the killing of non-combatants. With regard to the siege of certain entire tribes during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the article offers the following explanation: "Whenever the Prophet laid siege to an entire population, all the population and people of the entire tribe were fully and practically participating in the war. This is why an entire tribe was targeted. Medina's Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza is an example of this." Accusing the Jewish tribe of breaking an agreement reached with the Muslims, the article goes on to say that Islam abides by agreements between parties and that the Prophet Muhammad adhered to bilateral agreements even during wars. Muslims, it says, are not permitted to launch wars without informing the other party, and the Prophet Muhammad treated captives of war humanely, releasing some freely and others in exchange for payment.

Another article is titled: "*Not by The Swords of Kings – Islam Spread by The Sufis' Message of Love.*" This article rejects the argument that Islam spread by force when Muslim conquerors invaded different parts of the world. While it acknowledges that some Muslim rulers committed atrocities, it argues that they neither represented Islam nor worked for spreading the teachings of Islam. "Whatever they did was meant for the stability of their power, and they committed atrocities without considering whether a Muslim or a non-Muslim stood in their way. Yazid bin Muawiya did not even spare the grandson of the Prophet for standing in the way of his power, and martyred him," it states.

It also reiterates that the 14th century ruler Tamerlane would obtain fatwas from Sunni scholars to kill Shia Muslims, and from Shia scholars to kill Sunni Muslims.

"In India, Muslim rulers killed their brothers and nephews; in fact, for the sake of power, they even fought wars against their children, and did not refrain from imprisoning their fathers [notably in the case of Emperor Shah Jahan of the Taj Mahal fame who was imprisoned by his son]. It is clear that their wars were for power, not for Islam. However, in order to maintain their image among Muslims, they would accept the help of Islam," the article observes.

It goes on to argue that based on historical evidence, it was the Sufi mystics who spread the teachings of Islam through their message of love. Hajjaj bin Yusuf, who sent his nephew and son-in-law Muhammad bin Qasim to invade India, was known as a murderous general, but at the same time he offered services to Islam such as improving the readability of the Quran's Arabic script. However, the article does note that Islamic generals sent to different regions of the world achieved victories over cities and countries, paving the way for the movement of Muslims and for the spread of Islam to Africa, Europe and Asia.

The article says that Hajjaj bin Yusuf, who was otherwise a cruel ruler who dispatched such generals, was clear in his message that non-Muslims must not be mistreated. "Hajjaj was a brutal ruler, but despite this, wherever he sent armies he gave the generals orders that non-Muslims should be presented with Islam. If they accepted Islam, then Muslim rules would be in effect; if they did not, then they would be given full religious freedom," the article says, noting that his letters to Muhammad bin Qasim, who was sent to India, instructed that Islamic preachers be sent to the local population. After noting that Muslim invaders, for example Mahmud Ghaznavi who attacked India, carried out such aggression for money and power, the article goes on to say that these invasions resulted in easy movement for the preachers and that Sufi mystics played a great part in spreading Islamic teachings among the masses.

### **The Massacre of 700 Surrendered Jews**

One of the articles is titled: *"Islam [is] a Message of Blessing – When The Land of Medina Became Constricted for The Jews And Hundreds of Jews were Killed."* This article defends the expulsion and killing of Jews during the time of the Prophet Muhammad: "Islam has not permitted the killing of any innocent person but has ordered harsh punishments for crimes, with the aim of ending *fitna* [mischief] and conflict in the land of Allah." It should be mentioned here that the Quranic word "fitna" has a wider meaning for jihadi groups, which argue that it covers any non-Islamic practice as set out in Quran 8:39, which urges Muslims to fight until all mischief is removed and only the religion of Allah remains in force in the land of Allah.

"During the time of the Prophet, a time came when the Muslims were forced to end [the existence of] a Jewish tribe, Banu Quraiza, and their members of fighting age were killed, while some others were imprisoned, enslaved and sold. This incident rankles the Jews even today. And this incident is cited to prove that Islam and Muslims are lovers of violence," the article observes. At the time of the Prophet, the Arab land lacked a government, and various tribes such as Jews, Christians and polytheists would often fight and reach agreements among them. According to the article, the Prophet Muhammad had at various times signed agreements with polytheists, Jews and Christians.

The article states: "[According to an agreement involving the Jews] it was decided that no tribe would attack the other; if a tribe were to be attacked, then the other [ally] would be required to come to its defence. An attack on one of them was considered an attack on all. It was essential after this agreement that other tribes come in defence when Muslims were attacked, but the Jews did not abide by this; rather, they joined hands with the enemies of Muslims and engaged in attempts to eliminate them from the face of the earth. These efforts increased to the point where they attempted to kill the Prophet." It goes on to say that the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza, which had an agreement with the Prophet, was contacted by the polytheists and Jews during the Khandaq war to kill the Muslims.

The Banu Quraiza, the article notes, could not carry out their plan because a group of 500 Muslim riders maintained vigilance. It adds that even before the Banu Quraiza, another Jewish tribe "Banu Nadhir had hatched a conspiracy against Muslims and had become a threat to their existence, thereby being expelled and settled now in Khyber". Another Jewish tribe, Banu Qaynuqa, had broken an agreement, hatching a conspiracy to exterminate Muslims, and was expelled. The article explains the context for this: The Prophet Muhammad had sent a message to the Banu Qaynuqa to accept Islam, but the Jewish tribe refused, saying, "O Muhammad... so far you have fought against inexperienced people. We are a warrior nation. When war is fought with us, you will know that you have never fought someone like us." After receiving this reply, the Prophet ordered them besieged for 15 days; after that, they surrendered and the Prophet wanted to kill them, but an ally persuaded him to expel them instead.

The article comments: "The kind of actions that the Jewish tribes undertook and the conspiracies they hatched were so dangerous that had they succeeded, the Muslims would have been eliminated from the world." It adds that the Jews' Torah even stipulates the death penalty for such conspiracies, but that it was the blessing of the Prophet Muhammad that he merely expelled them from their lands. The Prophet, it says, went to fight against the Banu Quraiza for their breaking of an agreement: In 627 CE, soon after the Khandaq war,

Muhammad took 3,000 soldiers and besieged the Banu Quraiza tribe, which understood that they could not win and therefore sent a messenger to tell him that they would take their belongings and leave. Muhammad would not accept this offer, and the Banu Quraiza offered to leave their belongings behind; he rejected this as well.

The elders of Banu Quraiza made a third attempt to reach a resolution, and the Muslims sent Abu Lababa as representative. According to the article, the Jewish elders asked him whether they should hand themselves over to the Muslims; he said yes, but gestured that they would be beheaded. Ultimately, it was decided that all the men would be killed, the women would be taken captive, and their wealth would be confiscated. "[On the orders of Prophet Muhammad] 700 Jews were therefore massacred by Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Zubair and some members of the Aws tribe," the article observes, and adds that even today writers use this incident of the killing of the Banu Quraiza "to target Islam and the Prophet Muhammad".

The article justifies the extreme punishment of the Banu Quraiza: "The clear reason for this is that all the Arabs had launched an attack on the Muslims. Being their ally, it was the duty of the Banu Quraiza to aid the Muslims, or not take sides. But they broke their agreement and began preparing for war." Their punishment was also according to the Torah, it says, and argues that even in modern times, the punishment for treason under any constitution is nothing less than death. It also justifies the taking of captives and selling them as slaves so that they cannot regroup, "although Islam ordered good treatment of slaves".

### **America Mutilating the Character of Islam**

Another article, "The Islamic State's Massacres: After All, Who is Mutilating the Character of Islam?" begins thus: "Who is mutilating the character of Islam? Who is stamping labels of terrorism on the Muslims? Who is sowing the seeds of terrorism in the Islamic world? Who is causing the funeral of democracy in the Islamic world? Who has opened the game of terrorism from the Arab world through North Africa? Who has given a new lease on life to al-Qaeda? Who has nurtured the Islamic State [ISIS]? There are many such questions, but there is only one answer for them: America."

Using a highly disparaging term for the US, the article calls it "a dogla character, a dogli power and a dogla imperialism that has woven such a dangerous web to destroy Islam and Muslims in the world that the Islamic world and Muslims themselves are seen as responsible for every destruction". It continues: "From al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden to Islamic State chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, all have wires connecting them to America, and to Israel, which America has raised by arming and by allowing it to prosper by shutting its eyes. In the world today, the names of ISIS and of al-Qaeda are on everyone's tongue. And the cause is Western imperialism."

Iraq, the article says, was destroyed as a result of the 2003 American invasion, which led to the rise of ISIS: "When America set foot in Afghanistan, the country became the wrestling ground for the Afghan jihad [in the 1980s]. When it turned towards Iraq, then Iraq became the quicksand of violence. That was when al-Qaeda had breathed its last, but the [2003] Iraq war gathered thousands of jihadis under the flag of al-Qaeda. The Islamic State emerged in the civil war of Syria.... The truth is that America has attempted to mutilate Islam and the Muslims by naming terrorism as jihad and terrorists as jihadis."

Accusing America of linking madrassas to terrorism, the article says that it is America that carried out the propaganda of the jihadi forces, and that it uses a double standard with regard to the authoritarian rulers in the Muslim world, either by openly supporting them or by shutting its eyes to them: "America has made the media a powerful weapon in the campaign against Islam and Muslims, which has gone far ahead in the enmity against Islam."

The article concludes: "The tragedy is that until yesterday, the world would raise its voice for the Palestinians, and Israel was considered to be the cruellest cruel power. But now, in the form of ISIS... the world has forgotten the Jew face of Israel."

### **Indian Muslims Distant from Terrorism**

An article titled "Why are Muslims of India Distant from Terrorism?" is subtitled "Peace is Included in the DNA of Muslims." Arguing that Indian Muslims have always been peaceful, it says that this is mainly due to the teachings of a number of Sufi mystics of the Indian subcontinent. It observes: "Although hatred in the name of religion is common here, and Muslims have also complained of unequal treatment, such conditions are responsible for the growth of terrorism and secessionism. Despite this, the Muslims of India have proved to be peaceful."

Although a number of young Indian Muslims have gone to Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria in recent years to fight with the jihadis, the article comments that Muslims have generally kept away from terrorism: "Here, there have been a few terror attacks. Although Muslims are held responsible for most of such incidents and sent to prison, courts have mostly declared them innocent and freed them."

The article states: "Why is it that Muslims here are such peace lovers? Mountains of atrocities are broken on them, but they struggle against them peacefully. Muslim-killing riots are organised, but Muslims are not ready to give up. Their mosque [in the town of Ayodhya] is demolished and is converted into a place for idol worship, but Muslims limit their actions against that to fighting through the courts. Had the atrocities against the Muslims of India since Independence [in 1947] been committed against any other nation, its



youths would have embarked on terrorism and trod the path of destruction." The article then cites several statements by popular Sufi mystics of India, arguing that their teachings have created a love for peace among Indian Muslims.

Another article, "Why is Terrorism Growing in Muslim Countries?" asks why this should be so and why it is not happening, for example, in European countries: "The West is responsible for the volatility in the countries of Arab and Central Asia as it wants their puppets to rule there. Here, the entire game is for oil." It also argues that the West could not cause such instability in Iran and Turkey because "their populations and the strategy of their democratic rulers" had thwarted them. It accuses the West of double standards in foreign policy, saying: "Saudi Arabia was established with Britain's aid, and after that America and the West protected and supported it. The West, which does not tire itself of praising democracy, has emerged as the major patron of the monarchy in Saudi Arabia."

Blaming the West for the rise of terrorist groups such as the Taliban, al-Qaeda and ISIS, the article asks whether Muslims are terrorists or terror victims: "From India to America, everywhere, the sword of terrorism hangs over Muslims. They have to pass through extreme security checks at airports. Beards and caps are seen as symbols of terrorism. Any incident of violence is attributed to Muslims." Muslims based in Islamic countries too, it says, are responsible for this state of affairs; it adds that although Islam urges Muslims to educate themselves, they are far behind in scientific and technological education even though they spend lots of money on useless rituals.

### **Where should Rohingya Muslims Go?**

One of the articles is titled: "*Where should Rohingya Muslims Go?*" This article raises the issue of Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar who were recently forced to leave the country by boat in search of refuge in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. Despite appeals by the UN, it says, neighbouring countries have not been opening their borders to shelter Rohingya Muslims: "Not even Bangladesh is ready to open its border to Rohingya Muslims, who are being punished in their country for being [ethnic] Bangladeshis." It notes that a number of corpses of Rohingya Muslims, who were being led by human traffickers, have been found in the jungles of Thailand.

"In this regard, the refugees of the Middle East are fortunate that the borders of their neighbouring countries are open to them. These refugees at least find refuge, whether in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon or Egypt. However, the problem is very serious in Myanmar where extremist Buddhists are committing genocide of Rohingya Muslims. And to those Rohingya Muslims who are fleeing from Myanmar, not to mention Thailand and Indonesia, even the borders of Bangladesh are

closed to them – although they are persecuted for being Bangladeshis," the article says. It notes that a boat of 360 Rohingya Muslims in the Andaman Sea near Thailand was unable to find shelter, and that some 6,000 Rohingya Muslims were turned away by different neighbouring countries. "Following the genocide in Myanmar, some 1.6 million Rohingya Muslims have fled, but none will accept them," it says.

The article accuses the international community of silently watching the plight of Rohingya Muslims: "Whether it be America or China, all are busy coddling Myanmar because of its geostrategic location.... Some praise the political reforms [by Myanmar's rulers], some praise its democratic process, but none will utter a word about the persecution of Rohingya Muslims by its extremist Buddhist community." It laments that senior government leaders of Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand refused to accept the refugees despite appeals from the UN and human rights groups.

## Beyond the Muslim Quota

**A**head of the 2014 elections, both Hindu and Muslim politicians are reinforcing demands for reservation in education and jobs to Muslims, the premise being that anyone who professes Islam as religion will benefit from such a measure. On June 23, Union Minister Salman Khurshid said he was hopeful that the Supreme Court would uphold the constitutional validity of the Central government's decision to allocate 4.5 per cent sub-quota to Muslims within the existing 27 per cent reservation for Other backward Classes (OBC). Earlier, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav had backed the move, calling for a constitutional amendment to ensure Muslim quota.

Similar voices are being raised across India. In May, thousands of Muslims marched from Malegaon to Mumbai, demanding 20 per cent reservation in education and jobs. A Maharashtra government committee under Mehmood-ur-Rehman has recommended 6-7 per cent quota for Muslims. In Chennai, the Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam held a protest on July 6, demanding reservation for Muslims. Bahujan Samajwadi Party chief Mayawati has said she supports such a move. Not long ago, All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat asked the Congress government to clearly state a case for Muslim quota before the Supreme Court and prove its secularism. Several Muslim groups like All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, People's Front of India, and Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind have made similar calls.

No group says Islam will be the criterion for such a measure; these demands are rationalised in the name of "minorities" – referring mainly to Muslims. However, any Islam-based reservation will only harm the interests of Muslims, thereby also damaging the secular foundations of India. Indian Muslims do not qualify to be a minority. India is placed second or third in the list of countries with the largest Muslim population, about the same number as in Pakistan.

With population estimates upward of 170 million, Muslims cannot be called a minority simply because the number of Hindus is higher than theirs.

Additionally, a numerical definition of “minority” is inadequate. The blacks in South Africa were in a numerical majority during the apartheid era, but practically they constituted a minority as they were subjugated by the whites. Qualitatively, women and Dalits are the real minorities today compared with Muslims, who are politically more vocal than them which is really not the trait of a minority. There are reasons why Muslims, despite a large population, are being called a minority. First, Muslims seem to seek handouts from the government, a trait that might have roots in the era of nawabs and Mughal kings. This trait is absent among Parsis. Muslims can learn from Sikhs who typically do not look to the government to better their life.

Second, Muslim leaders nurse minorityism as it helps them get state benefits. Minorityism pushes Muslims into inertia. These leaders belong to the upper castes, or *Ashraf*. Organisations of backward caste Muslims recently held a meeting in Lucknow, where they called for a boycott of political parties that support the Ashraf-driven agenda for a religion-based quota.

Third, there is a class of Hindu politicians who, in order to get Muslim votes, advocate Muslim causes. Hamid Dalwai, the Muslim social reformer of Maharashtra, warned that such Hindu collaboration could only undermine the secular foundations of India, arguing that the secularism of Hindus who treat Muslims as a minority encourages Muslims' anti-secularism, and that minorities in a democracy have equal rights, not privileges. “The very fact that in India we call Muslims a minority and Hindus the majority,” Dalwai wrote, “implies a non-secular attitude.”

Minorityism was also encouraged by the Ranganath Mishra Commission constituted to look into issues relating to linguistic and religious minorities in India and the Rajinder Sachar Committee tasked with preparing a report on the social, economic and educational condition of the Muslim community. The current system of affirmative measures was dreamt up over half a century ago whereas the needs of the modern Indian republic today are different. India needs a courageous politician to lead the republic into its second edition so that it benefits citizens irrespective of belief or caste. A bold leader must order a review of the system of affirmative measures, remove reservation in parliament for the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs), and quash any quota based on

caste or creed. There are better means of delivering social and economic justice.

It is almost impossible to find such a visionary leader, but let us not forget that the bulk of Indians are youths under 25 who identify themselves not as members of caste and religious communities but as Indians. In the coming years, they will accept an overhaul of the state benefits system. They will also not vote along caste and religious lines, as their parents once did. For now, it does seem that the political class lacks the ability to lead the republic in a constructive direction. However, journalists, academics, Supreme Court judges and non-governmental organisations can initiate a debate on a new system of affirmative measures.

One criterion could be to use the nuclear family and its income as the qualifying unit for reservation in education and jobs. It is easy to find these through statistical instruments like Below Poverty Line and Antyodaya Anna Yojana ration cards, Aadhaar or permanent account numbers. The debate on quota based on caste and religion must be abandoned, thus freeing communities emotionally so that they can stand on their own. The republic must talk to its citizens rather than to communities and desist from giving the feeling that it exists to give jobs. There seems to be a relevant case for reservation in Parliament for women, but such a measure should come with an expiry date.

Sometimes, a single decision can set a community's progress back by decades. The Congress government's 1986 legislative decision in the Shah Bano case, the controversial lawsuit claiming maintenance by a divorced Muslim woman, unleashed Hindutva forces, and damaged the welfare of Muslims in the long term. The Supreme Court is set to rule on the question of Muslim quota. The judges concerned have a historic responsibility, says the Delhi-based legal reporter Satya Prakash, to think like the founders of modern India who withstood the religious strife of Partition to deliver a secular republic to Indians.

# Shut Down Darul Uloom Deoband

**I**n the interest of Muslims, there is an urgent need to reform or shut down Darul Uloom Deoband, the internationally known Islamic seminary engendering obscurantism, sectarianism and religious orthodoxies. In a recent fatwa, it ruled that Shias, mainly Bohra Muslims, are non-Muslims, thus violating the egalitarian tenets of the Indian republic. Fatwas are Islamic legal opinions given in response to a query and, while not many Muslims follow them, they do influence the devout ones. A large number of clerics in Indian villages act as doorkeepers to Muslim minds.

In recent years, Darul Uloom Deoband has delivered numerous fatwas which undermine women's freedom. Notable among them have been that women cannot preach or deliver sermons; working women cannot mix with male colleagues; women must wear a burqa; triple talaq uttered through a cellphone is valid; women cannot serve as qazis, or judges; talking to one's fiancé on phone is *haram* or forbidden; adolescent girls over 13 years cannot ride bicycles; it is undesirable for women to drive a car; women should not contest elections and must observe purdah; and co-education is impermissible. Fatwas also include: Muslims should not work in banks; modelling and acting are offences; it is wrong for children to watch cartoons on television; donating blood and organs is *haram*; photography is sinful; celebrating birthdays is not allowed; a person blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad should be killed; body scan is impermissible; and life insurance is illegal.

Such fatwas emasculate Muslim minds. Noted academic S. Irfan Habib urged Muslims to ignore them. Yasooob Abbasi of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board said these "irresponsible" fatwas brought a bad name to Islam; another member of the board QR Ilyasi said that co-education schools existed in Saudi Arabia and Iran. Maulana Syed Ashraf Kichhouchhvi of the All India Ulama and Mashaikh Board,

a body of Sufis, dubbed the anti-birthday fatwa as having nothing to do with spirituality. Regarding body scan, Faizan Mustafa, vice-chancellor of the National Law University in Hyderabad, said that whatever the state did for the common good was allowed in Islam. Arshad Alam of the Jamia Millia Islamia University described these fatwas as sectarian and contested by Ahl-e-Hadees, Barelvis and Shias. Waqarunnisan Ansari, a Mumbai corporator, questioned the clerics' competence to issue fatwas, asking if they knew the terrible conditions women faced. However, social activist Javed Anand said that religious groups such as Tablighi Jamaat, Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, Ahl-e-Hadith and Jamaat-e-Islami did not think "any differently" from Darul Uloom Deoband.

Islamists argue that one should ignore these fatwas as the silent majority of Muslims disregards them. In fact, the silent majority cowers in fear when a cleric rules an entire village. Islamists accuse liberal Muslims of defaming Islam and argue that anti-women fatwas are just a few. But, these fatwas only mirror the ideology that causes Muslim decay. At a time when man is on his way to landing in Mars, it is meaningless to debate what arguments Darul Uloom Deoband offers for its fatwas. The concern is that it is creating misfits for the modern world; its graduates will go on teaching a distorted version of Islam.

After 1857, when Muslims lost power in Delhi, two responses emerged: one, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan advocated scientific education as the cure for the decay in Muslim society and established the modernist as Aligarh Muslim University; two, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi favoured Islamic revival and founded Darul Uloom Deoband. The seminary relies on contributions and trains 5,000 residential students, with 1,000 students graduating every year with an eight-year Fazeelat degree. However, its syllabus covers only three disciplines: Islamic jurisprudence, *ahadith* or traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Quran. It does not even teach Islamic history, except for what figures in a Hadith. It has recently introduced skills courses in English and computer science for post-Fazeelat students, but these are not aimed at broadening their minds.

Delhi-based journalist Abid Anwar, an alumnus of Darul Uloom Deoband, says clerics who issue fatwas do not read newspapers or watch television and are unaware of societal realities. "The seminary must incorporate social sciences, mathematics, geography and natural science right from year one of the Fazeelat course if it wants to prepare its students to interact with the wider society," Anwar says, citing the example of Bihar where madrassas introduced the subjects in the 1980s. However, reform initiatives have always been rebuffed.

In 2009, the Indian government tried, in line with the Sachar Committee recommendations, to introduce a madrassa reform legislation so that the degrees issued by madrassas are valued on a par with mainstream schools. But Abdul Khaliq Madrasi, pro-vice chancellor of Darul Uloom Deoband, accused the government of interference. In 2011, the seminary's reformist vice-chancellor Ghulam Muhammad Vastanvi was removed. A tiny number of clerics sabotaged the madrassa reform. The crux of the matter is that a few Islamic clerics have the ability to push an entire community into decadence. The real problem is the darkness emanating from Darul Uloom Deoband. It has to be remembered that Deoband-leaning seminaries are producing jihadists and suicide bombers in Pakistan.

The government must set up an educational commission on Darul Uloom Deoband and other seminaries, inquiring into their role in causing Muslim backwardness. It must examine if their syllabus meets the educational needs of Muslims or if they are producing second-class citizens; conduct a probe into their sources of funding and whether they are influenced by foreign elements like Saudi Wahhabis; work to set up a council of fatwas representing clerics from all Islamic sects and ensure 50 per cent of them are women; and suggest measures to recruit female teachers in seminaries in the hope that in a hundred years they will produce a women-friendly interpretation of Islam.



# The Role of Jamaat-e-Islami

A religious war is raging on two sides of India's borders. To the west, Pakistan is inching closer to a jihadist takeover, metamorphosing into a Sunni version of what Shia Iran became after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. To the north-east, Bangladesh is sinking into a quagmire of religious-political murders and hate. Both countries illustrate how mixing religion and politics in public life stuns the intellectual capacity of a man to discern what a good society should look like. People are sacrificed at the altar of fanatical religious beliefs.

In the two countries, minority groups like Hindus, Christians, Shias and Ahmadi Muslims are being systematically murdered. In Pakistan, not a day passes by when a Shia Muslim is not killed. In Lahore, a 72-year-old Ahmadi Muslim was recently jailed for reading the Quran. In Bangladesh, members of Jamaat-e-Islami attack Hindu homes, lay siege to streets and kill rivals. In March, *Daily Ittefaq* of Dhaka carried an article, warning: "A power is rising slowly in Bangladesh; it violates our liberty and life. It violates our very existence. The adversary is not a man but an ideology."

The violence raging on India's borders is not random; it is predictable, part of a pattern, originating from an ideological narrative about Islam. The narrative can spill over into India, home to a large Muslim population. Indeed, Indian clerics are already waging a hate campaign against Ahmadi Muslims in Punjab, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh. As the largest religious outfit of South Asia, Jamaat-e-Islami is the lead movement responsible for sowing this exclusivist and hateful narrative. In Pakistan, it led a violent campaign in 1953 against Ahmadi Muslims, who are now declared non-Muslims.

Founded in 1941 by Sunni theologian Maulana Abul A'la Maududi, Jamaat-e-Islami defines Islam as an all-encompassing way of life and has nursed, like other religious groups, a vision of an Islamic state.

For historical reasons, it split into organisationally autonomous units, now functioning in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Kashmir. Not for the first time in its history, Jamaat-e-Islami is undergoing a crisis of legitimacy in people's eyes, especially in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

On November 4, Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami leader Syed Munawar Hasan described Hakimullah Mehsud, the Pakistani Taliban chief killed in a drone strike, as a "martyr" for waging "jihad against enemies of Islam". Despite criticism from the Pakistani military and people, Hasan reiterated the argument, also noting that Pakistani soldiers killed in the war against terrorism cannot be called martyrs. Hasan's description of terrorists as martyrs mirrors the ideological narrative constructed by Jamaat-e-Islami and other religious groups over the past seven decades.

Recently, journalist Amir Mir recorded how al-Qaeda terrorists have been routinely captured from the homes of Jamaat-e-Islami leaders in Pakistan. In 2002, Khwaja brothers, who belonged to Jamaat-e-Islami, admitted to sheltering al-Qaeda leader Yasser Al-Jazeera. In 2003, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, the mastermind of 9/11, was captured from the home of a Jamaat-e-Islami leader in Rawalpindi. In 2003, Terrence Thomas, an Australian al-Qaeda militant held in Karachi, had used the house of a hockey player whose wife is a Jamaat-e-Islami member. In 2004, Attaur Rehman – an official of Islami Jamiat Tulaba (IJT), the student wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami – was involved in an attack on an army general's motorcade in Karachi. Dr Akmal Waheed and Dr Arshad Waheed, who were arrested in the case, were working for al-Qaeda and belonged to Pakistan Islamic Medical Association, a Jamaat-e-Islami affiliate. Recently, al-Qaeda members were arrested from an IJT member's hostel room in Punjab University. On November 29, IJT member Abdur Rehman was among terrorists killed by a drone in Waziristan.

Over the years, Jamaat-e-Islami has supported violence against minority sects, military dictators of Pakistan and jihadist groups while operating as a political party. In the 1971 war for Bangladesh, it created two paramilitary groups, al-Badr and al-Shams, which were involved in the killings of Bengali intellectuals and political activists. Several top Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, including Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Abdul Kader Mullah and Ghulam Azamare, were among those convicted of the 1971 war crimes by a tribunal in Dhaka this year. Now, a Bangladeshi court has declared Jamaat-e-Islami illegal, banning it from politics. Some writers like Taslima Nasreen supported the ban saying it is practically a terrorist group.

In India, Jamaat-e-Islami would have followed a similar trajectory but for India's thriving democracy that forced it to stay on the path of pluralism. One thing it cannot do is to try to impose its ideology on India's unwilling society. However, about 5 per cent of Jamaat-e-Islami members in the middle ranks do nurse an extremist orientation, but the leadership is working within the wider framework of Indian democracy and pluralism, especially by doing educational and humanitarian work, says Dr Ishtiaque Ahmed, who teaches at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He says Jamaat-e-Islami has in fact taken steps to participate in politics by floating the Welfare Party of India. Ahmed notes that despite ideological unity, Jamaat-e-Islami in India has dissociated itself from its counterparts in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Kashmir.

On a recent visit to Dhaka, Syed Haider Farooq Maududi, son of Jamaat-e-Islami founder Maulana Maududi, argued that a democratic state should stay away from religion, observing that "religion is for the people and people are not for religion". Arguing that religion should stay within the personal life of individuals, he said: "The holy Quran does not talk about politics, it rather talks for the person so that one can become better. Political interpretation of religion always brings destruction in society." It is clear that the war in Pakistan and Bangladesh underlines an urgent need for separation of religion and politics – a precondition for a free society. This is a challenge for Islamic nations across the world and a lesson politicians in India need to learn.

# Historical Separatism Among Indian Muslims

Journalist MJ Akbar's decision to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been dismissed as political opportunism, but there are two aspects of his move that are relevant to the health of Indian polity: first, the morality of Akbar's politics and its tenability in the country's democratic political discourse; second, the impact of his decision, both functionally and at the level of symbolism, on the need for a paradigm shift in Muslim intellectual thinking in India.

Let us take the second point first. The practice of politics in India has failed to free Indian Muslims from an intellectual paradigm that has been causing their overall backwardness. Historically, Muslim leaders have failed to comprehend a kind of politics that could help Muslims see their future integrated into the country's mainstream. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was undoubtedly the tallest personality among Muslim reformers and worked for fostering scientific temperament among Muslims. However, it was Hamid Dalwai, a Maharashtra-based Muslim reformist thinker, who pondered deeply over the need for democratic politics for Indian Muslims.

According to Dalwai, Muslim leaders missed two historical opportunities for the advancement of Muslims: one was Sir Syed's renaissance movement among Muslims, which emerged in response to the increasing gap in the economic and educational well-being of Hindus and Muslims; the second was the Muslim leaders' failure to align fully with Hindus during the freedom movement. After the 1857 war in which the two communities fought unitedly against the British, the Muslim leadership should have logically worked together with Hindus. However, it initiated a politics of separatism in which the current Muslim intellectual paradigm is rooted. Three reasons can be attributed to this: first, Muslims felt a great loss of power after the fall of Delhi in 1857 and set out to redress it for themselves; second, Muslim thinking remained stuck with the idea that Islamic glory can only come

through state power; third, the British government's divide-and-rule policy, a practice pursued by all foreign invaders, damaged Hindu-Muslim relations.

This historical separatism was bolstered in the post-Independence period through riots that were used mostly by the Congress through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and later by the BJP to create divisions and garner votes; secularism that is now used as a body of ideas to keep Muslims from the country's mainstream; the quota politics that is practised to keep Muslims emotionally in their cocoon. Unlike Sir Syed, Dalwai, who died aged 44 in 1977, was the product of Indian democracy and worked for ending this historical separatism.

Dalwai envisioned the development of Muslims as full citizens in a thriving democracy, arguing against treating them as minorities and noting that "the secularism of Hindus encourages the anti-secularism of the Muslims"; and "minorities have a claim to equal rights and equal opportunities but they should not have a claim to special status or privileges". As the Indian republic searches for maturity in its weaknesses, India's mainstream too longs for Muslims to stop treating themselves as minorities, embrace modern education as they are indeed doing to some extent, reject orthodoxy and allow Muslim women to work and contest politics like other citizens. This thinking results from a recognition that historical separatism continues to exist.

This brings us to the first point: the tenability of Akbar's political choice. Some writers think he is eyeing a parliamentary seat should the BJP form the government; but of all charges, Akbar cannot be called an opportunist as he had joined the Congress in 1989 when the party had no hope of winning and was indeed thrashed at the elections. Also, at any time in Indian democracy, politicians do change parties for power. Even ideological rivals, the BJP, the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and the Congress, floated an electoral alliance in Sikkim in 2009 (though it floundered later). Politics being the art of the possible, Akbar did what was possible for him. The vibrancy of Indian democracy is such that members of one family contest from ideologically opposite parties. This is an important lesson, as politics is about choosing the future, not the past.

Pune-based playwright Sameer Khan thinks Akbar's move to the BJP will have "no consequence to Indian Muslims" and that indeed Imam Bukhari, Najma Heptulla and others previously had taken similar steps. "Indian Muslims have always voted for secular Hindu parties and not for Muslim parties and that trend remains," Sameer Khan says. While the argument remains valid, it relies on secularism, which

nourishes the historical separatism that prevents Muslims from breaking through their mass intellectual paradigm. There is another concern: if Muslims shun some parties instead of having them to moderate their conduct by joining them, they will alienate themselves significantly, more so if it is a party with a countrywide presence. That Muslims must embrace all parties is a relevant message conveyed through Akbar's political choice.

Indian Muslims must also realise the dehumanising politics of secular leaders, notably Congress president Sonia Gandhi embracing fundamentalist clerics like Imam Bukhari, who present no future for Muslims. As to the issue of riots, it is an aspect of Indian democracy that only a new level of maturity in the political system can overcome. To address these issues, a national agenda based on the rule of law and development must speak in the following terms: the Indian constitution is the true religion; building hundred smart cities will induce inclusive growth; building toilets, not temples, is the way forward – a courageous statement from BJP's Narendra Modi.

Akbar may have played a significant, if not vastly consequential, role in striking at the historical separatism, which is why he is also being criticised. Interestingly, in his article explaining why he joined the BJP, Akbar addresses this very point of historical separatism by citing Modi's Patna speech soon after the bomb blasts in Patna on October 27, 2013, at Modi's election rally: "His [Modi's] instant response was to ask a powerful question to both Hindus and Muslims that went to the crux of the principal challenge before our nation, and included its solution as well. He asked these two great communities to choose: they could either fight each other, or together they could confront that shaming curse called poverty."

# Madrassas Recycling Muslim Decadence

**B**efore he became prime minister, Narendra Modi assured Muslims that their economic development would be promoted and their culture preserved. “I want to see you laptop in one hand, Quran in the other,” he said. Typically, Muslims too look to the government to fix their life. Every other day, newspapers carry stories in which Muslim leaders and well-intentioned Hindu politicians accuse the government of failing to address Muslim backwardness. The government alone is blamed for all problems confronting Muslims.

However, a community's development is a function of voluntary initiatives by its members. In societies throughout history, governments have never given jobs to all their citizens; people have largely depended on personal initiatives like cultivating farms, launching a business or starting a school for their development. Even today most Indians do not earn their living from the government. But even in government-assisted situations in which Muslims can address their educational backwardness effectively, they are proactively engaged in reproducing mass ignorance for the next generation.

Let us take the example of nearly 1,400 madrassas managed by the Bihar State Madrasa Education Board (BSMEB), which is about to give state funding to an additional 2,400 madrassas. The Nitish Kumar government has given teachers at madrassas salaries on a par with their counterparts in government-run schools. Degrees obtained from madrassas are recognised for government jobs and admissions to colleges. However, instead of ensuring educational progress, Bihar's madrassas only conjures up a dark future for Muslims.

Maulana Amiruddin, a teacher in a school near Patna, has taught at a madrasa in West Champaran for three decades. He narrates a sad picture of educational rot at madrassas: only 15 per cent of the students who appear for Fauqania (matriculation) are genuine, the rest do not attend classes at madrassas where they are enrolled; 50-60 per cent of

all students who appear for the Wastania (8th grade) board are enrolled retrospectively for the entire academic session just before the examination. These figures reveal wide-scale trends. Some teachers were sacked for possessing fake degrees obtained simultaneously from schools and madrassas in a single year.

Nowadays Muslim families send their children to madrassas not to gain knowledge but just the degrees. According to Maulana Amiruddin, only about 20-25 per cent of the degrees awarded by the BSMEB were on merit. This means that over 75 per cent of those who passed with excellent marks had not attended classes. They owe their success to mass-scale cheating at examinations, where examinees are told to write the question and the corresponding answer number and leave the answer sheets blank. Also, assessors routinely give good marks without reading the answers.

With Muslim boys armed with technical degrees from private institutes getting jobs in the Middle East, families sense an opportunity for government jobs for their daughters too, says Patna-based journalist Irshadul Haq. Even when a girl has not attended a madrassa, she appears at the annual exam, gets a degree and becomes eligible for government jobs. Young men and women, totally incapable of teaching, are hired as teachers, thereby reproducing a cycle of educational backwardness for Muslims for the next 30 years; effectively, it produces a cycle of Muslim decadence for a century.

Maulana Amiruddin says: "In many cases, a person is appointed to teach Urdu but cannot teach the language, and ends up teaching Hindi (which is easier)." He notes that principals of madrassas are unable to stop the enrolment of absentee students because of opposition from madrassa management committees controlled by local zamindars, or feudal lords. An official of the BSMEB, who did not want to be identified, said: "The Muslim community's future is dark. The next generation of Muslims will be worth nothing, perhaps not even capable of leading a funeral prayer."

Writing in the context of global capitalism, economist Andre Gunder Frank spoke about "the development of underdevelopment", a process by which rich nations promoted underdevelopment in poor countries by the exploitation of resources. In the case of Muslims, it cannot even be called the development of "underdevelopment" because it is essentially a voluntary mass reproduction of ignorance for several generations, even in situations like Bihar where the government is sincerely assisting them. Madrassas, controlled by Islamic clerics, will also need drastic rewriting of their syllabi: teaching English and computers from first grade, for example.



Outside the government framework, Muslims fail to take voluntary initiatives for their betterment – unlike minorities such as Sikhs, Parsis and Christians. Muslims, India's second majority community, habitually look to the government. All good schools and colleges are run by Christians; and all Muslim-managed educational institutions, including those of repute like the Aligarh Muslim University, are caught up in mediocrity. The case of Bihar madrassas reveals two fundamental reasons for Muslim backwardness as in many parts of the world: feudalism and ulema (Islamic clerics, who are the most organised section among Muslims).

With regard to organising jalsas (religious gatherings) or building new mosques with tall minarets in towns and villages, Islamic clerics are quick to take initiatives to collect money, more so from expatriate workers in the Middle East. For Islam's public symbolism, they are proactive, but with regard to their own socio-economic development, voluntary initiatives are nil.

Some writers argue that change among Muslims must come from within. However, throughout history change has come from external sources – by mixing with foreign ideas, globalisation, wars and technologies. Since the madrassas would be funded by the Bihar government, the state has to hand over their management to non-Muslim officers from the civil services; currently the state appoints Muslims only to run madrassas. But the first step is to derecognise madrasa degrees for the simple reason that this country and Muslims deserve better.

## In Defence of Maulana Mahmood Madani

**I**ndian Muslims and a large number of Hindus disapprove of Narendra Modi and his government's perhaps intentional failure in guiding the state law and order machinery to stop the killings in the Gujarat riots of 2002. However, it is sometimes essential to counter public sentiment when it runs counter to the public interest. Precisely, this is what Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind leader Maulana Mahmood Madani did by acknowledging in a television interview that Gujarati Muslims voted for Modi in the recent elections and they may be better than Muslims in other states, notably in West Bengal where they are economically worse off, or in Maharashtra where the number of Muslims who are in prisons are more than those in Gujarat.

During the interview, Madani stated: "In several assembly segments, Muslims voted for Modi. There is a perceptible change of heart and circumstances are different now. I agree the times are changing. Muslims in Gujarat are economically better off than in several states which have so-called secular governments." Madani's influence is limited among Muslims, but his statement is likely to kick-start a debate on the relevance of the prevailing attitudes towards Modi. It will also influence thousands of Islamic clerics across India who owe their allegiance to the Madani-controlled Darul Uloom Deoband, the second largest seminary in the world.

Madani was immediately criticised by Muslim leaders and academics. Ghulam A Anjum of Jamia Hamdard University reacted thus: "Madani considers himself a representative of the Muslims... but I don't accept such a discourse about Modi." Khalid Rashid Firangimahli of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board said: "It is unfortunate that some Muslim leaders are trying to create hype for Modi by giving absurd statements. We don't want development at the cost of the murder of Muslims." Maulvi Adil Siddiqui of Darul Uloom Deoband remarked, "It is incorrect that the perception of the community is

changing towards (Modi).” These sentiments reflect the prevailing view among Muslims. But if Madani is not a representative of Muslims, it is equally correct to argue that none of his critics too are.

At this juncture in Indian polity, only economic progress can bring about a tangible change in the life of Muslims, who need to open a new chapter of rapprochement with Modi. Such a rapprochement has already been initiated by Muslims in Gujarat. In 2011, the noted Islamic cleric Maulana Ghulam Mohammed Vastanvi courted controversy by lauding Modi's development policies in Gujarat that benefit Muslims and Hindus alike. Some Muslim leaders have also joined the Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party in Gujarat. Muslims who criticise Madani should not forget that Gujarati Muslims understand Modi better for his politics. Critics who accuse Madani of seeking a quid pro quo should Narendra Modi become the prime minister must know that Madani's Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind is a nationalist organisation and his response on Modi is in the framework of economic nationalism.

Muslims must reject politics that benefits a tiny section of Muslims, and not the rickshaw pullers, labourers or mechanics whose children need industrial training institutes to gain basic vocational skills. The uplift of Muslims can only be achieved if pro-development politicians are voted to power and enough economic opportunities are created for everyone. Madani's statement on Modi offers an opportunity for Muslims to view the country's politics in the light of an economic agenda.

In the past, the Congress has sought to win Muslim votes at election times. Such attempts were seen as appeasement of Muslims, seasonal in nature and condemned by rival politicians. Muslim voters have seen through such designs, recognising that the Congress and others seek them for political ends. From the 1960s through the 1980s, the Congress was instrumental in fomenting Hindu-Muslim riots to win elections. This politics turned upside down in the mid-1980s when Rajiv Gandhi surrendered before Muslim fundamentalists in the Shah Bano controversy, thereby unleashing Hindutva forces and causing a serious damage to the secular character of the Indian republic.

And not long ago, Congress leader Salman Khurshid demanded a separate quota for Muslims in jobs, much like Muhammad Ali Jinnah demanded a separate territory for Muslims before 1947. This separatist politics of Congress must be stopped. No government in the world can provide jobs to its entire people, who should rather be empowered through a robust development policy that creates jobs for all, whether Muslim, Hindu or Christian.

As more and more Muslims are getting enlightened about the workings of Indian democracy, a new Muslim leadership is also emerging. This leadership employs a liberal nationalistic framework, which is evident from the inclusive messages of the Peace Party in Uttar Pradesh or the United Democratic Front in Assam. This change reflects the inclusiveness of Indian democracy. This trend can also be seen in Jamaat-e-Islami's internal debates. Although primarily a religious party, Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have after decades of discussions come around to accepting Indian democracy as ultimately in the interest of Muslims. Muslims in Gujarat, Bihar and elsewhere are realising that their development is linked to the prosperity of India.

Madani's statement has come in for criticism from some Muslim leaders and human rights activists who are still rightly angry about the Gujarat riots, but it essentially reflects ordinary Muslims' confidence in Indian democracy and their growing aspirations. Narendra Modi, on his part, needs to undertake a series of measures to win the trust of Muslims and all Indians. However, these measures should be for strengthening the rule of law and must not be aimed at appeasing Muslims. A Modi-led BJP must stand for the following: independence of the Indian judiciary, autonomy to police departments, zero tolerance for corruption in bureaucracy and ministries, transparency in political parties' finances, and a robust development agenda that builds an array of universities and offers better economic prospects for every Indian. Along with democracy, building economic prosperity is the only path to progress for Indian Muslims, as Modi's Gujarat demonstrates.

# Asaduddin Owaisi – The Jinnah of Modern India

Islamists are those who advance the cause of Islam, not people's interests, in public life by political and legal means. In the years leading to Partition, Muhammad Ali Jinnah demanded a separate territory for Indian Muslims. Eight decades later, Asaduddin Owaisi and other Islamists are demanding a separate quota for Muslims in government jobs and educational institutions. The politics is for Muslims, but Islam is the criterion. In Maharashtra, where Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) is nursing an electoral constituency, events are organised every week in which Muslims are told to unite for reservation in jobs.

These demands are meant to address Muslim deprivation, but for practical purposes these events advance a certain politics, a necessary precondition for benefits accruing from believing in Islam. Unfortunately, the Islamic lobby in India – steered by Owaisi and Islamists from Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and aided by well-intentioned non-Muslim politicians like Mani Shankar Aiyar – has erroneously convinced Muslims that they are deprived of reservation benefits. This is incorrect: Other Backward Class (OBC) Muslims do get quota benefits. But Owaisi's politics demands that believers of Islam, not just the poor but all of them, must benefit. Not people, Islam is the criterion for Owaisi, as it was for Jinnah.

It is immaterial how Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat conceives Hindutva. It is consequential that Hindutva is seen as a sectarian ideology militating against the universalism of Hinduism. Owaisi's recent statement, a retort to Hindutva leaders that “everyone is born a Muslim and then he is converted to other religions”, may have surprised many, but it is a familiar argument taught by Islamic scholars. Even if it were not catalysed by Hindutva groups, Owaisi's politics nurtures a religion-based representative politics for Muslims. It will damage the interests of Muslims, as Jinnah damaged the future of Muslims and non-Muslims of Pakistan.

In many ways, Owaisi is the Jinnah of modern India. For Jinnah, Owaisi and jihadist groups like al-Qaeda, this propensity to see everything separate for Muslims from non-Muslims originates in Islam. Liberal writers defend Islam, arguing that it teaches coexistence. They cite the Quranic verse (109:6): "To you your religion, and to me mine." However, this verse teaches separatism from non-Muslims, not integration and pluralism. It was revealed when non-Muslims of Mecca invited the Prophet Muhammad to live together. The offer was rejected by the Prophet who told them: to you your religion, to me mine. Islam drove Jinnah's politics; Islam drives Owaisi's politics.

To elaborate what Owaisi is doing to India's politics, one must grasp that the Two Nation Theory is a concept, a theory that camouflages, rather than clarifies, Islam's role in politics. In popular understanding, the view that has been perpetuated is that the Two Nation Theory means Muslims and Hindus cannot live together. In reality, this theory is not merely about Hindus versus Muslims; it is rooted in the Islamic idea that Muslims cannot mix with non-Muslims. Islamic clerics tell us that Islam is a noble religion which protects non-Muslims; what they do not tell us is that it protects non-Muslims only when they live as *dhimmis* (second-class citizens) under Islamic rule.

Jinnah was secular, but he was not always secular. Urdu poet Muhammad Iqbal taught Islamism to Jinnah. Iqbal wrote this Urdu couplet: *Hazaron saal nargis apni benoori pe roti hai/Bari mushkil se hota hai chaman mein deedar paida* (For thousands of years the narcissus laments its colourlessness; with great difficulty the one with true vision is born in the garden). Akbar S Ahmed, author of *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: The Search for Saladin*, writes that the scholars of South Asia agree that in this couplet, Iqbal was speaking of his own success in converting Jinnah to the cause of an Islamic state, a cause espoused today by jihadist leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the end goal of Owaisi's politics.

Under Iqbal's influence from 1937 onwards and after Partition, Jinnah's speeches were laced with imageries from Islam. He made statements like "Muslims... have not been crushed during the last 1,000 years"; "I shall never allow Muslims to be slaves of Hindus"; "The cows that Hindus worship Muslims eat; the villains that Hindus malign, Muslims idolise"; "The goal of Pakistan is not only to get freedom and autonomy but the Islamic concept of life"; and "It is Prophet Muhammad's spiritual blessing that Pakistan came into being. Now it is Pakistanis' responsibility to turn it into the model (state) of the Righteous Caliphs." Owaisi can hardly disagree with Jinnah.

The story remains the same as when Muhammad refused to share power with the non-Muslims of Mecca, when Jinnah refused to live together with Hindus, and when Owaisi refuses to see that Muslim OBCs get reservation and advances the cause of Islam in India's political discourse. In the town of Beed, Maharashtra, on January 6, Owaisi said: "Muslims are seeking reservation on the basis of their backwardness, not religion." To Islamists, OBC Muslims do not exist. Although Owaisi denies that Islam is the cause, his ideas are rooted in Islam, much like Jinnah's were. At the root of this thinking is the conception of Islam being the only ruling ideology.

Owaisi's Islamism thrives in Hyderabad and Mumbai, the most fertile regions for radicalisation of Muslim youths for jihad. Despite the bloodiness of Partition, India adopted an inclusive constitution. One way to reject Owaisi's politics could be to quash all reservation and invent a welfare plan for the truly disadvantaged: those who hold cards like BPL (below poverty line) or women below certain income tax levels. Next time you see a girl in torn clothes begging at a railway station, stop seeing if she is a Hindu or Muslim. Defeat your thinking if it tells that she needs, so to say, 0.05 per cent reservation. Quota politics is the response of intellectually bankrupt Indians ruling us. By creating Pakistan, we thought we bought lasting peace, but Owaisi is dangerously rebirthing Jinnah's politics. Pakistan's experience teaches that Indian constitution alone must be our religion.





# **SECTION VII**

## **The Case for Islamic Reformation**



# End the Hereditary Imamate of Delhi

**I**t appears that the sole qualification needed to become the Shahi Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid is the privilege of genealogy. This disqualifies more than 180 million Indian Muslims from becoming the imam of the historic mosque in Old Delhi. The tenets of Islam are irrelevant here; only ancestry matters. It is also an assault on the principles of democracy, modern civilisation's antidote to the role of heredity in political life.

On October 30, it emerged that the Jama Masjid's Shahi Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari had invited about 1,000 Islamic leaders from across the world to a ceremony scheduled on November 22 in Delhi to anoint his son Syed Shaban Bukhari, 19, as the Naib Imam, or deputy, who will assume the title of Shahi Imam one day. This is a lineage that can be traced to the mid-17th century when the Jama Masjid was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, who in search of purity could not find an imam in India and brought Syed Abdul Ghafoor Shah Bukhari from Bukhara in present-day Uzbekistan.

Indian Muslim groups are furious about being seen to be subjugated to this hereditary imamate that has no sanction in Islam. Opinions have been aired on how few Muslims in the country accept the Shahi Imam's authority to speak for them. Yet, he leads prayers for thousands of Delhi's Muslims, who offer namaaz behind him five times a day, and he has a large enough following to exercise an outsize influence on India's political and spiritual life. Throughout history, imams have legitimised the coronation of kings, and they are sought for exactly the same purpose in modern times, most recently by Congress president Sonia Gandhi. Sometimes, imams also undermine the authority of rulers, notably in the case of Razia Sultan, the woman who ascended the Sultanate of Delhi in 1236 CE. So the imamate's tradition of hereditary succession deserves close scrutiny.

In the Quran, the Arabic word for sperm, *nutfa*, occurs a dozen times. According to the Quranic verses 53: 45-46, Allah creates two mates – the male and the female – from a single drop of fluid. In the Quranic meaning, *nutfa* is a non-gendered concept.

The Bukhari family has daughters too. Assuming that the Shahi Imam would have brought them up with Islamic piety, it would have been a revolutionary act to anoint a daughter as the next Shahi Imam. Given that Delhi's Jama Masjid is the country's most prominent mosque and holds historical symbolism throughout the Islamic world, such an act would be in tune with the evolving ethos of Indian democracy. As understood by the Bukharis ever since Syed Abdul Ghafoor Shah Bukhari became the first Shahi Imam on July 24, 1656, however, a successor must always be male.

Genealogy can assume a political role, as it has done throughout history. Numerous individuals have acquired power on its basis, sometimes even absolute power – as in Saudi Arabia or North Korea, for example. Back in the 7th century CE, the Prophet Muhammad, whose sons died in childhood, is understood to have nominated his daughter Fatima's husband, Ali ibn Abi Talib, as the Maula of Muslims, but the leadership succession was denied to him by politicians of the era led by Abu Bakr, who became the first caliph after the Prophet's demise by outmanoeuvring his relatives, an event that heralded centuries of Shia-Sunni bloodshed that continues to torment Muslims in the Arab world and in Pakistan, where Shia Muslims – in favour of Ali's succession – suffer persecution on a routine basis.

As part of the anointment ceremony, the Shahi Imam has planned a series of dinners: one for about 3,000 namaazis (those who offer prayers) in Delhi; a second one for hundreds of invited religious leaders; and then an exclusive banquet on November 29 for diplomats and politicians from India and abroad, mainly from the Islamic world. If this money were to be spent on cleaning up the surroundings of the Jama Masjid, it could help the country's Swachh Bharat [Clean India] campaign. But the Shahi Imam has bigger things on his ideological mind; he has extended an invitation to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and pointedly left India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi off the invitation list, thus deliberately stirring a political controversy over the event, one that is particularly provocative since the latter was elected to power with a historic mandate.

"I have invited several Indian and foreign political leaders for attending the anointment ceremony of my son. Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has also been invited, but I have not sent invitation to

Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Muslims have not forgiven him for the Gujarat riots,” the Shahi Imam roared, regardless of the fact that the Supreme Court of India has not found anything to implicate Modi for the same and that at least a section of Indian Muslims have accepted him. Not only has the Shahi Imam taken it upon himself to speak for millions of Indian Muslims, deeming their consent unnecessary, he has also made a spectacle of insulting India's prime minister.

Modi, a former *chaiwalla* who has more or less buried hereditary political parties in India and is on his way to turn his Bharatiya Janata Party into the country's most diverse political party, would anyway have been the last person to attend the Bukhari ceremony. Modi has better things to do: clean our streets, improve the lives of millions of the poor, and perhaps attend the wedding ceremony of Bollywood heartthrob Salman Khan's sister. Bukhari's invitation to Nawaz Sharif gives traction to the argument that secularism in India is viewed too often as a function of the country's kinship with Pakistan. The Shahi Imamate is a relic from the Mughal era, and as an anti-national force, it has blatantly chosen to harm Hindu-Muslim relations and the cohesion of India. This is anti-people.

For Indian Muslims, the Shahi Imamate is worrying. Husain Dalwai, a member of Indian Parliament, has criticised the Shahi Imam, saying there is “no succession act in Islam” and it is “not necessary” that the son of a king should succeed him. Social activist Gyas Qureshi made his demand categorical: “End the title Shahi Imam as the country is now a democracy, not a Mughal domain.”

There are examples of monarchies being reformed in accordance with the changing times. Britain, for instance, rewrote its succession rules recently to ensure that even a firstborn girl child could ascend the throne. In April 2013, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II signed the Succession to the Crown Act, ending a 300-year-old practice of the firstborn male being the royal heir.

Syed Shaban Bukhari, a student of a politically meaningful subject like Social Work at Amity University who will succeed his father to be the 14th Shahi Imam, was born in an India free from colonial rule. Assuming that he reads newspapers and comprehends how modern democracies work, he has a historic opportunity thrown his way: he could renounce the imamate and become a social reformer, perhaps one of the greatest Muslim modernisers since Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898). In 1936, Edward VIII of England, also the Emperor of India, renounced his throne and the claims of his descendants in order to marry his love. Likewise, a conscientious act by Syed Shaban Bukhari

to end the imamate could hold lasting significance for the Islamic world, and even set off a wave of modern thinking.

Given that most Muslim organisations outside the city of Old Delhi are opposed to this relic of the Mughal era, the Indian government would gain support across the country if it were to throw its weight against a hereditary imamate. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which loves to earn social opprobrium for raising divisive issues, could uphold this as a cause that enjoys Muslim approval in large numbers, and demand that Indian Muslims be relieved of the power of *nutfa*.

In the Quranic meaning, *nutfa* has an additional connotation: Adam, the first man, was also the first prophet. In that sense, every human being on the earth is a prophet with the power to use one's thoughts and actions as tools of human liberty and social progress. This is a lesson every Muslim youth must learn. Some, like Benazir Suraiya of Bhopal who turned out to campaign for a vegetarian Eid Al-Adha, are already agents of change in India.

Indian Muslims are fortunate to live in a flourishing democracy, but they need to embrace it more wholeheartedly. They need to free their lives of archaic social, legal and historical norms and institutions – such as the Shahi Imamate. According to a 2005 High Court order, the Jama Masjid is the property of the Delhi Waqf Board and the Shahi Imam is its employee; he should be fired from his job for transferring his job as imam purely on the basis of *nutfa*. As the institutions of Indian democracy strengthen, the need of the hour is to dislodge the Bukhari family from the pulpit and reclaim the Jama Masjid, a historical monument of global importance, for the Indian masses.

## Sir Syed's Message of Reform Lost

Every year, October 17 is celebrated on the campus of Aligarh Muslim University to mark the birthday of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), arguably 19th century's foremost Muslim reformer. After the fall of the Mughal rule in 1857, Sir Syed thought deeply over the causes of Muslim decline and argued for rejecting religious orthodoxy and initiating educational reform to ensure the advancement of Muslims. He toured England during 1869-70, learned about the British educational system, familiarised himself with the ideas of European Enlightenment and sciences, and returned, inspired by *The Spectator* of London, to launch *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, a journal for educational and social reform among Muslims.

Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) alumni groups organise Sir Syed Day functions on October 17 in India, the Middle East and North America, but his message of Enlightenment and reform is lost. Invariably, the annual functions are known for two features: dinners and *mushairas*, or Urdu poetry recitations. While Urdu did play a role as the language of rebellion against the British, its contribution to generating good ideas for the advancement of Muslims now is nil. Under incapable editors, *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, which once stood for advancing scientific temperament among Muslims, is reduced to favouring friends and reproducing translations of articles. It has failed to challenge religious orthodoxies, cause stir up ideas among students and the wider Muslim society, debate on issues that matter to Muslims. It is hardly read on campus.

There is no dearth of ideas among Muslims, but good ideas are missing. Across the Islamic world, clerics and academics are establishing disciplines like Islamic sociology and Islamic finance in a bid to revive Islam. They are full of ideas, reproducing the same ideas each time. AMU has a large residential campus that can match any varsity. It runs hundreds of courses, from food craft, theology and

management to foreign languages, tourism, and physical and social sciences. It trains students in various skills and can take credit for turning Muslim youth from rural areas into graduates on par with those from many other universities, but a university of its scale and infrastructure is performing far below its potential.

Its negligible role in scientific innovation, original research in social sciences, or excellence in other fields reflects the following: a comprehensive failure to recruit and promote meritorious teachers, lack of progressive culture and free thinking among students, an inability to promote a culture of debate and questioning on campus. In that sense, AMU mirrors the wider Muslim society. Hooliganism among students also corrodes the academic culture. Worst, AMU student union leaders have engaged in collecting *bhatta* (extortion) from nearby shops and were recently the subject of ridicule for spending, in one case, Rs.1 lakh on buying water for a function.

In India and abroad, it is understood that universities should be administered by academics who better understand their needs. However, it seems that Muslim societies have a predilection for Islamism and authoritarianism, factors evident in the governance of leading minority institutions like AMU and Jamia Millia Islamia of Delhi. Along with the failure of the voluntary education sector, regionalism, feudalism and Islamism are undermining north Indian Muslim educational institutions. P.K. Abdul Aziz, a southerner from Kerala who did not speak Urdu and did not bend to the pulls of the feudal, Islamist and regional lobbies of north Indians on the AMU campus, was accused of being an enemy of Urdu and forced to quit as vice chancellor.

On October 17, at the main function to mark Sir Syed's 196th birthday, the AMU vice chancellor, retired Lt. Gen. Zameer Uddin Shah, pledged to turn the university into an "intellectual powerhouse", but Shah has recently shunned the path of setting up expert committees to recruit academics. Instead, he has misused emergency powers to appoint professors, notably in the departments of West Asian studies, English and electronics engineering – one of them being a retired major general with no teaching experience in West Asian studies, another an Islamist ideologue with no research experience in English and a third from the Tablighi Jamaat with no degree in electronics. Shah, a former deputy chief of the Indian Army, has relied on recruiting retired military officials to key offices, notably Brig. S. Ahmad Ali as pro-vice chancellor, Gr. Captain Shahrugh Shamshad as registrar and another as an intermediate college principal.



Despite the total absence of government interference in the recruitment of its vice chancellor, AMU has been run by retired officers from the military and the Indian Administrative Service in recent decades. Dr Shamim Akhtar, an assistant professor at AMU's department of adult and continuing education, says Shah's reliance on former military officers strengthens a culture of nepotism on campus and damages academic excellence and the motivation of the teaching staff whose anger recently stopped him from appointing a military man as caretaker of the medical college. Akhtar rues that elections to the teachers' association are marked by public demonstrations of regional loyalties. Regionalism – between those from eastern and western Uttar Pradesh – affects even the recruitment of meritorious teachers.

Insofar as the culture of feudalism, regionalism and Islamism has seeped into the functioning of the university, it is unlikely that it can shake off these corroding agents, but there is still hope. On AMU's website, a passage about its founder notes that the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, a journal started by Sir Syed, “succeeded in agitating the minds in the traditional Muslim society. Anyone with a poor level of commitment would have backed off in the face of strong opposition, but Sir Syed responded by bringing out another journal, *Tahzibul Akhlaq*.”

The challenge now before AMU and the editors of *Tahzibul Akhlaq* is to foster a culture of debate that challenges religious orthodoxies among Muslims, thereby creating a wider intellectual base from which reformist Muslim writers in India can advance Sir Syed's message of Enlightenment and reform.

# Muslim Children of 6-14 Must Be in School, Not in Madrassa

Seldom have Indian Muslims who enroll in madrassas become physicists, economists, space scientists, chartered accounts, software engineers, doctors, or even political leaders. Those madrassa students who have entered modern professions have done so because of their personal efforts. This exclusion of Muslim citizens from India's public life is because of the madrassas themselves.

Experience has also proven that Muslim children who enter madrassas predominantly become Islamic clerics, Urdu poets, Imams of mosques, revivalist preachers of the kind found in Tablighi Jamaat and Jamaat-e-Islami, or political parasites of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind type. Simply said, madrassas limit options for Muslim children while schools expand their life's choices. Once in a while, a student of Darul Uloom Deoband turns up in Delhi's television studios for debate or becomes an engineer, which does not automatically mean that madrassas are producing journalists, engineers or experts on international politics. Madrassas close the windows of the mind at an age when a child's curiosity should empower him to mentally prepare for a vast world outside.

Therefore, it is obligatory on the Indian state to ensure that our education system opens up choices for Muslims in the manner it does for non-Muslims. The Maharashtra government's move to treat madrassas and Vedic institutes as "non-schools" and their students as "out of school" is a simple administrative measure that will expand choices of life for citizens. This measure followed a survey carried out by the Maharashtra government on July 4 to identify and ensure that all children of 6-14 years age enter schools. This is a constitutional objective that the Indian state is required to fulfill irrespective of whether these children are Muslims, Hindus, Christians or others. Effectively, Maharashtra's move derecognises madrassas that do not teach mathematics, sciences and social studies.

Under the Right to Education (RTE) Act passed by the Congress government, madrasahs and Vedic institutions that do not meet the teaching standards in mathematics, sciences and social studies were already derecognised. The Maharashtra government is merely implementing the RTE Act. In Indian democracy, education is the only effective tool for empowerment. Education creates multiple turning points in the life of a citizen, offering numerous career opportunities to progress in life. Madrasah students fail to rise in life because ideas and skills taught to them exclude them from mainstream professions. Consequently, Muslims are pushed to the margins of society. The overwhelming role of madrasahs seems to be to shut the doors of public life to Muslim girls, but India's Ministry of Women and Child Development has shut its eyes to this vast problem.

Generally speaking, madrasahs are of two kinds. One, seminaries established by Muslims which teach the Quran, Hadiths (sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) and Islamic studies – sometimes they also teach basic Hindi, English and mathematics. Such madrasahs survive on charities and are not accountable to any government authority for their activities. Two, in some states such as Bihar, madrasahs get funds from the government for introducing science, mathematics and social studies in their curriculum. In these cases, it is clear that some of the state funds are used to finance the study of the Quran, Hadiths and Islamic studies, since all teachers of Bihar madrasahs get salaries from the state. This is a violation of the constitution, which requires the state to remain secular.

Under Article 30(1) of the Indian constitution, religious and linguistic minorities have the "right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice". The Indian constitution does not offer a definition of "educational institution", but the teaching of the Quran, Hadiths and Islamic studies is not the constitution's objective and therefore madrasahs imparting religious education cannot be called "educational institutions". Madrasahs and Vedic institutes, which teach religion, enjoy the freedom under Article 25, which guarantees "the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion". What is important is that every Indian child, whether Muslim or not, is guaranteed a fundamental right to free and compulsory education under Article 21(A), and therefore every child of 6-14 years of age must be in school during school hours of the day. Only after 14 years of age or outside school hours, children can go to a madrasah or Vedic institute.

A larger problem is that madrassas are not geared to preparing Muslims for life in this world. Their sole objective is to teach Quranic subjects and prepare children for the propagation of Islam and for a life after death. Madrassas, whether aided by state governments or not, excel at this objective. Naturally, students emerge from madrassas as misfits for modern society. Darul Uloom Deoband is the world's second largest madrasa after Cairo's Al-Azhar university. Let us look at some fatwas (directives) delivered by it in recent years: talking to fiancé on phone is *haram* (forbidden); Muslims must not work in banks; women cannot preach or deliver sermons at mosques; donating blood is un-Islamic; saying "talaq, talaq, talaq" to wife on cellphone is valid divorce; acting and modelling are disallowed by Islam; women cannot become qazis (judges); homosexuality is an offence in Islam; adolescent girls are barred from riding bicycles, and so on.

A few Islamists and their brethren on the Left argue that fatwas are merely advisory opinions, but the fact is that they forget that these opinions have more power on the lives of Muslims. The ideas contained in these fatwas, whether issued formally or not, are taught by madrassas across the world. Students who emerge from madrassas in India create a value system based on these fatwas. Also, thousands of students graduating from madrassas like Darul Uloom Deoband go on to establish numerous similar madrassas, teaching the same retrogressive ideas, producing misfits for our society and creating ghettos in our neighbourhoods. Each madrasa is a mini-Darul Uloom Deoband that dictates the lifestyle choices in its neighbourhood. It takes just one madrasa graduate to stand up and deliver a sermon that shuts up an entire village of Muslims. Some analysts argue that not even 1 per cent of Muslims go to madrassas, but this 1 per cent Muslims rules the actions of the remaining 99 per cent of Muslims.

# Banish Religion from India's Politics

**T**he current elections in India have seen political parties courting Islamic clerics to win votes, undermining the democratic ethos of the Indian republic. On November 1, Aam Aadmi Party leader Arvind Kejriwal met Barelvi cleric Tauqeer Raza Khan, seeking his support for the Delhi Assembly elections. Earlier, Khan had called for “beheading” Bangladeshi feminist writer Taslima Nasreen and he represents a school of Islam that feeds religious orthodoxies among Muslims. On March 28, ahead of the parliamentary elections, Khan switched his loyalty in favour of Bahujan Samajwadi Party leader Mayawati, saying only she could defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

On March 30, Maulana Nurur Rahman Barkati, the Shahi Imam of Tipu Sultan Mosque in Kolkata, warned that if a Narendra Modi-led government enacted a uniform civil code, Islamic clerics would “proclaim jihad”. Earlier, in December 2013, Barkati had campaigned successfully to prevent the telecast of a serial scripted by Taslima Nasreen which portrayed women in powerful roles and defined their rights. Barkati’s position as the mosque’s hereditary imam is against the tenets of Islam, democracy and common sense, but he enjoys the support of Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee.

On April 1, Congress president Sonia Gandhi met Syed Ahmed Bukhari, the Shahi Imam of Delhi’s Jama Masjid, who endorsed the Congress as “the best party” to lead India and care for the minorities. Like Barkati, Bukhari too occupies his position as a hereditary imam for which there is no justification. Later, Bukhari was criticised by his brother Syed Yahya Bukhari for degrading the status of the Jama Masjid by visiting Sonia Gandhi, unlike in the past when politicians visited the mosque. Yahya Bukhari also accused the Congress of betraying Muslims, saying “no political party has worked more against the interests of Muslims in India than the Congress”.

On April 12, Azam Khan, not strictly a cleric but nevertheless a powerful minister in Uttar Pradesh, told Muslim voters that former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and his brother Sanjay Gandhi were killed by the “wrath of Allah”. He enjoys the support of the Samajwadi Party (SP) of Mulayam Singh Yadav. On April 25, Abu Azmi, another SP leader, appearing before the Maharashtra State Commission for Women, defended his advocacy of “death” for women over extramarital sex, stating: “Our religion does not allow women to have sexual relationships with anyone except husbands.”

The BJP, which criticised Kejriwal and Sonia Gandhi for coddling Islamic leaders, was not behind. On April 15, BJP president Rajnath Singh met Muslim religious leaders, including Shia cleric Kalbe Jawwad, to seek their support in the elections. While Sonia Gandhi urged Bukhari to ensure secular votes are not split, Singh, running from Lucknow, argued: “I feel that if India has to become a strong nation then all castes, religions and their followers have to be assimilated (into the mainstream), and this is what the BJP believes in.” These are noble ideals, but these parties are embracing orthodox clerics who have absolutely no vision on vital issues like public health or digital literacy and economic development of Muslims.

With the advancement of democratic ideas associated with the European Enlightenment, religions have more or less retreated from politics, spawning an enlightened state that protects its citizens irrespective of their beliefs. Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism – while influencing the everyday lives of followers – cannot influence policies of states. This trend is countered by Islam, with Muslims generally approving its role in political systems. Current sharia movements in Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei are retrogressive. Hopes for a democratic change generated by the Arab Spring not long ago got lost because of concerted efforts by Islamists to insert Islam into those countries' governance.

In his book *Democratic Enlightenment*, Jonathan Israel argues that Enlightenment was not only an intellectual movement. “There was a great deal of social grievance and legal archaism in the eighteenth century, and the Enlightenment precisely by establishing new principles, understood intellectually, set up a powerful process of social and political innovation, reformism, and change which profoundly affected the whole of society,” he says. Reformism began in 1517 when Martin Luther challenged the Pope's authority by nailing his Theses to a church door in Wittenberg. In the 18th century, Shah Waliullah of Delhi argued that many earlier verses of the Quran were cancelled by

verses revealed later, but Islamic scholars like him, their ideas tempered with pragmatism, argued against deleting those irrelevant verses, an intellectual work that must be done.

In 1950, the people of India gave themselves the constitution, a legally enforceable document of revolutionary ideas that instituted a framework of Enlightenment for India at the level of ideas and practical life, heralding an era of unprecedented socio-political change. It is within the constitution's framework that reform among Indian Muslims can be ensured, and is indeed occurring as more Muslim women go to schools and get elected to panchayats. Some clerics too are joining this movement of ideas. In Urdu daily *Roznama Inquilab* of April 18, Islamic scholar Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani wrote an enlightening article, arguing that to vote is a national and religious duty of Muslims, and while women cannot contest election according to Islamic law, Muslim women cannot escape this duty under the special conditions of India.

Politicians embrace Islamic leaders because they realise Muslim societies are conflicted about Islamic legal archaism. Reasoned thinking, the motor of human progress, is besieged by religious leaders like Syed Ahmed Bukhari, Tauqeer Raza Khan and Nurur Rahman Barkati.

The Indian media is reporting these issues in a critical perspective, indicating that Indian society is unprepared to accept religion in politics. However, nurturing the ethos of an open society also means that legislation alone cannot lead to reform or prevent mixing of religion with politics. Fortunately, India has a vibrant civil society, and NGOs are inculcating the concept of rule of law among people. The media, too, has emerged as the defender of the Indian republic and its democratic ethos. It should now be the task of young Indians to reject politicians who support religious leaders.

# South Asian Secularism Leads to Islamism

**I**mprobable it may be, but in South Asia, the practice and politics of secularism seems to be giving birth to Islamist forces. In 2008, secular leaders of the Pakistan People's Party and the Awami National Party, which came to power in Islamabad and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province through the ballot, signed an agreement with the Taliban led by Maulana Fazlullah for implementing sharia rule in the Swat region. By early 2009, the Taliban were burning music CDs and DVDs, ordering barbers not to shave beards, preventing women from visiting bazaars and setting up sharia courts until they ordered a total ban on female education – forcing the international community to take note of the modern-day barbarism, just hundred miles from Islamabad.

“From barbarism to civilisation requires a century; from civilisation to barbarism needs but a day,” observed Will Durant, the American historian celebrated for his magnum opus *The Story of Civilisation*. Just out of General Pervez Musharraf's military rule, Pakistan began sinking into barbarism, notwithstanding the judgment of Pakistanis who had voted these secular parties to govern them for a brighter, democratic future. As the jihadists were enforcing the ban on female education, young girls like Malala Yousafzai, 11 years old then, felt shut in. Malala, who had already been in the vortex of a local education movement led by her father, wrote an anonymous online diary, describing her feelings about the jihadists in her neighbourhood.

Before reading what happened next, here is a brief history of secularism *vis-a-vis* Islamism in the Indian subcontinent. During the 1940s, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a thoroughly secular Muslim who drank wine and ate pork, steered a movement for Pakistan in the name of Islam. In 1974, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a secular leader, gave an altogether new power to Pakistani parliamentarians to legislate who should be called Muslim and who a minority, a negative term for Hindus and



Christians in Pakistan. That year, Ahmadi Muslims were constitutionally declared non-Muslims. Bhutto's secular daughter Benazir would later facilitate the Taliban's rise in the 1990s.

In the 1980s, secular politician Syed Shahabuddin demanded a ban on Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and the Rajiv Gandhi government obliged him, unleashing Islamist and Hindutva forces, which had been strengthening since 1986 when the same government surrendered before the fundamentalists in the Shah Bano case. The surrender would subsequently lead to the demolition of the Babri mosque and the Gujarat riots of 2002. Recently, secular Congress leader Salman Khurshid advocated reservation in jobs and education in the name of Islam. In neighbouring Pakistan, Imran Khan, also a secular leader, has emerged as the Taliban's political ally.

The consequences of such secular-Islamist politics can always be foretold, as can be seen from the damage from the actions of Jinnah, Zulfikar and Benazir Bhutto, Syed Shahabuddin (and Rajiv Gandhi), and the secular leaders of the Awami National Party and the Pakistan People's Party in the case of the Swat Taliban.

On October 9, 2012, Malala was shot in the head by the Taliban for her diary written three years ago, airlifted to England for medical treatment and became a celebrity, eliciting prayers of support from teenagers around the world. Girls and boys in Pakistan, where children do not often hear positive stories, adored her; she was celebrated on Pakistani television channels as the nation's daughter, having earned international awards and met with world leaders, including United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Barack Obama and Queen Elizabeth II.

Will Durant wrote: "Barbarism is like the jungle; it never admits its defeat; it waits patiently for centuries to recover the territory it has lost." The Islamist forces were isolated in the face of Malala's popularity in Pakistan. Soon after her book *I am Malala*, her autobiographical story co-written with journalist Christina Lamb, was published in October 2013, Islamist commentators and columnists launched a movement to discredit Malala in Pakistani eyes.

Three influential commentators warrant mention: Zaid Hamid, who advocates jihad against India; Maqbool Orya Jan, an Urdu columnist peddling Islamism on television; Ansar Abbasi, an editor known for authoring conspiracy theories against the West. Zaid Hamid accuses Malala of being used by the West against Islam, Pakistan and Muslims. Orya Jan attacks her for not denouncing *The Satanic Verses* and writing, "My father also saw the book as offensive to Islam but

believes strongly in freedom of speech.” Abbasi goes a step further, literally haranguing liberal debaters by asking them religiously sensitive questions on television channels such as: Do you personally think that Ahmadis are Muslims, or that the words “peace be upon him” should accompany the Prophet Muhammad’s name. They question how the 16-year-old Malala could write this book even as Pakistani children are taught that 17-year-old Islamic conqueror Muhammad bin Qasim invaded Sindh in 712 CE, launching Islamic rule in India.

Malala is criticised because her father wore black armbands on the 50th anniversary of Pakistan’s Independence Day, saying that Swat had suffered since its merger with Pakistan in 1969. There is nothing blasphemous in the book. The Islamists are attacking her for trivial points: for writing Jinnah instead of Quaid-e-Azam, or great leader; for not writing “peace be upon you” with the Prophet Muhammad’s name, not a norm in English.

The book is an absorbing memoir and should be on the reading list of all teenagers in India for the following reasons: Malala upholds an idea of freedom against the forces of darkness in South Asia; she is a role model for girls in Pakistan and India; she stands against forces which are inimical to democracy; her story, still unfolding, is the story of civilisation and illustrates how misguided actions of secular leaders could unleash barbarism in our societies. The bigger challenge, maybe for the courts, is how to rescue South Asian secularism from clutches of Islamism.

# Islamic Reformation in India

**R**eformist Islamic writer and activist Asghar Ali Engineer, who passed away on May 14, devoted his life to reinterpreting Islam to counter Muslim fundamentalism, strengthen women's rights and forge communal harmony in India. His writings, invariably based on the reinterpretation of Islamic literature from the early periods, are a repository of progressive ideals for a new generation of Islamic reformists, who are influenced by democracy and its associated ideas of individual liberty and human rights.

Works of Islamic jurisprudence were written much before the age of democracy, rendering Islamism relevant for modern times. Writing after 9/11, American academic James Q. Wilson summed up the wedge between Islam and the democratic age: "When the West reconciled religion and freedom, it did so by making the individual the focus of society, and the price it has paid has been individualism run rampant, in the form of weak marriages, high rates of crime, and alienated personalities. When Islam kept religion at the expense of freedom, it did so by making the individual subordinate to society, and the price it has paid has been autocratic governments, religious intolerance, and little personal freedom."

Like Engineer, Islamic reformists are now breathing in democratic times, inspired essentially by a range of individual rights and political freedoms unleashed by democracy. Symbolically, the democratic age began when America became free in 1776, expelling British colonists and engendering decolonisation which gained momentum after World War II, leading to freedom for a number of African and Asian nations, including India.

However, it was in the wake of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran that democracy emerged as the only legitimate form of government deemed to be in conflict with all other systems. The tide of people's opinion began turning in favour of democracy with much force after the

fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 and freeing of Central Asian nations, and more so following the 9/11 attacks.

A forceful, though rhetorical, defence of democracy after 9/11 by United States President George W. Bush, who made it a point to travel to New Delhi in 2006 to stress the message of democracy for Muslims, may have contributed the seeds for the Arab Spring. However, the lack of an infrastructure of democratic ideas in the Middle East prevented the Arab Spring from blooming whereas a strong presence of democratic institutions in India has not only widened the sphere of political liberty for its people but has also generated a new generation of Islamic reformists and activists. A thriving democracy acts as a bulwark against Islamists: for example, Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan produce extremists, but the same Deobandi seminaries in India do not.

In the history of Islamic reformation in India, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan stands out. After the fall of the Mughal rule in 1857, two movements in Islam emerged. One was led by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, who established Darul Uloom Deoband, which has trained hundreds of thousands of orthodox Islamic clerics. The other was led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who founded the Aligarh Muslim University, a centre of modern education. Sir Syed wrote a number of books, and articles in magazines and an interpretation of the Quran to stress the need for modernity among Muslims, but he did so in pre-democracy times. And this is the key point: Islamic reformists working in post-Independence India are influenced, unlike their counterparts in earlier times, by democracy and its associated freedoms.

In this context, Hamid Dalwai, a Muslim reformer of Maharashtra who died at the young age of 44 in 1977 and whose works were recently discovered by historian Ramachandra Guha, stands out as more astute in his thinking than Sir Syed. Dalwai truly represented a democratic age and argued for a uniform civil code as a liberty project for Muslims. He also saw the protection of people's rights in democratic institutions and secularism. Dalwai argued that the secularism of Hindus who treat Muslims as a minority encourages the anti-secularism of Muslims, and that minorities in a democracy like India have equal rights, not special privileges. His belief that the rights and freedoms of Muslims and non-Muslims alike will flourish in Indian democracy is actualising.

Compared with other countries, India has emerged as the best country for Muslims, offering a range of political freedoms, educational access and economic opportunities not available in Islamic nations. Indian Muslims experience expanding spheres of democratic freedoms

in their everyday life. As an example, Muslim actors do not have to change their names to Dilip Kumar, Madhubala or Meena Kumari anymore.

Democracy is also tearing apart prevailing Islamic orthodoxies. In Afghanistan, the Taliban are forced to ponder over the use of referendums and elections, though as a tactic inspired by Egyptian Islamists. With regard to caste, Islam was a total failure in the Indian subcontinent, with Syeds and Khans refusing to marry girls from lower-caste Muslim families, and in parts of India separate boundaries being marked in graveyards for lower-caste Muslims. In fact, even Sufis did not hand over their spiritual orders to those from the lower Muslim castes. Slowly but steadily, the political freedoms guaranteed by Indian democracy are aiding Islamic reformers to challenge obscurantist practices and dominant orthodoxies among Muslims.

Notable reformers and activists include Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, who has authored scores of books reinterpreting Islam for modern times; Daud Sharifa, who thought of India's first mosque for Muslim women; the brave Shaista Ambar, who has challenged clerics publicly; Syeda Saiyidain Hameed, who has questioned orthodox interpretations of Islam; Uzma Naheed, who works to empower women in Mumbai; and the like. Significantly, their work and activism are possible in an atmosphere of freedom created by Indian democracy while in neighbouring Pakistan reformists like Javed Ghamidi are forced to leave the country due to Talibanisation. The works of Ambar, Hameed, Naheed and Sharifa denote the emergence of a unique brand of Islamic feminism in India, characterised by attempts to explore the limits of liberty within Islam, as Engineer endeavoured to achieve in his life.

# The Case for Reform of Islam in India

Speaking about the risk of a likely lone-wolf attack in India, Maharashtra state police chief Sanjeev Dayal told a newspaper in January: “We had this case where this man wanted to go to a school in Bandra [an area of Mumbai] and do something there, which he was prevented from doing. So, yes, it is a challenge finding out who is getting radicalised.” The threats of lone-wolf attacks are being increasingly neutralised by Indian security agencies, but the growing radicalisation among Indian Muslim youths needs more than that.

From information available in the public domain, it appears that the police chief was speaking about Anis Ansari, who wanted to launch an attack on the American School in Bandra. A transcript of Facebook chat between Anis Ansari and a Muslim youth based in the United States reveals worrying symptoms of radicalisation. Ansari, using the Facebook identity Logan, advised the American that just for a hundred dollars he could carry out an attack in the US that would “sink the earth” under Barack Obama's feet. Ansari also justified his own plan to attack the school: “[I want to target] the American School because in addition to France and Italy, children from ten allies of America study there. We should hit that part of the enemy which causes the most pain. I mean: the citizen.”

Symptoms of radicalisation were noticed over the past year in all regions of India, from Manipur to Maharashtra, Kerala to Kashmir, Bangalore (Karnataka) and Hyderabad (Telangana) to Jharkhand. However, it appears that the Maharashtra region may be particularly volatile, in addition to the areas surrounding Hyderabad. In January, someone acting on behalf of the jihadist organisation Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) twice wrote on the bathroom walls of the Mumbai airport terminal. The first comment warned of an attack on January 10, but that day passed off peacefully. The second comment warned of an attack on January 26, when US President Obama would

grace the Republic Day parade in New Delhi. Earlier, on December 26, Mumbai-based newspaper *Urdu Times* published an essay in which it – citing the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad – advocated the killing of Muslims who converted to Hinduism or other religions.

In an essay in the weekly news magazine *Open* of January 21-27, this writer examined in detail how Muslim youth in almost every town across India shared the ideas that drove the jihadist attackers of the French satirical weekly magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. Commenting on the January 7 attack on *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, a large number of young Muslims based in the towns of Tinsukia, Kolkata, Patna, Chhapra, Nawada, Tanda, Lucknow, Dehradun, Budaun, Aligarh, New Delhi, Srinagar, Jalandhar, Bhilwara, Indore, Jabalpur, Kheda, Ratnagiri, Jawahar, Nagina, Amravati, Pune and Bangalore justified the attackers. The argument is not that all Indian Muslims are terrorists or will become terrorists, but the necessary point of contention is this: Muslim societies are undergoing industrial-scale Islamisation driven by Islamic clerics speaking in mosques, madrassas and *jalsas*, religious congregations which are held every week in every region of the country. This offers a fertile ground for ISIS-like groups.

Since the radical ideas are rooted in basic Islamic teachings, the vital question is whether an entire generation of youth can shed inimical ideas inherited from their parents and Islamic clerics? Fortunately, history does bear witness to examples of entire generations of people having shunned harmful ideas held by their parents. For example, in Germany, today's generation has been courageous in accepting the historical fact of the anti-Jewish beliefs and support for Nazism held by their parents. Once the Germans accepted this reality, they were able to put an end to Nazism and fascist ideas in their midst. Similarly, a generation of the Japanese youth today has rejected the anti-Chinese sentiments of their parents. Italian youth have comprehensively rejected Fascism, which was popularly accepted by their older generation.

In India itself, a generation of Hindus – starting from Raja Ram Mohun Roy to Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi – accepted that the caste system practised for years in the country was indeed a scourge; and once they accepted the problem in society they were able to initiate great social, political and legal reforms. Millions of Dalits who lived on the margins of Indian society for centuries were catapulted into the corridors of power in the

post-Independence India. In initiating such far-reaching reforms, entire generations of Indians have bravely tried to banish the beliefs on caste taught by their forebears for ages.

These lessons should indeed convince Muslim youth across the world today that at least some of the beliefs they have inherited from their forebears and clerics are not compatible with the tenets of modern civilisation, especially those that conflict with gender equality and undermine peace with other religious groups. Especially, the contemporary generation of Muslims, not just in India but across the world, needs to face the fact that consciously or unconsciously they are taught that Jews are evil. It is time Muslim leaders across the world admitted this reality of anti-Semitism and nurtured the next generation of Muslim children on the path to a bright future.

Fortunately, in its own limited ways, India has an established tradition of theory and praxis in favour of Islamic reform and the need for modern education among Muslims. In the aftermath of the 1857 war in which the Mughal rule was decimated by the British, two responses arose from within the Muslim community: one was led by Islamic cleric Muhammad Qasim Nanautwi (1832-1880), who thought that the welfare of Muslims would emanate essentially from the revival of Islam and went on to establish the Darul Uloom Deoband seminary. Darul Uloom Deoband today continues to lead Muslims on the path of orthodoxy, seeds the ideology of Islamism and undermines the welfare of Muslim women. It must be rejected.

A second response emerged under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98), who thought that Muslims in India must learn material sciences, adopt the ideas of the European Enlightenment and inculcate a scientific temperament in order to be successful in this world; he established the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, now known as the Aligarh Muslim University. Sir Syed's educational mission, especially with regard to the cause of Islamic reform as espoused by his Urdu journal *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, has been abandoned by the leaders and students of the Aligarh Muslim University, whose only preoccupation in modern times is to organise *mushairas*, Urdu poetry recitations, for entertainment purposes. The growth of burqa culture on the university campus in recent years is also a worrying sign.

In the post-Independence era, Maharashtra-based Muslim social reformer Hamid Dalwai was perhaps the most astute thinker to ponder over the future of Muslims in the democratic age. He grasped the workings of democracy and argued for securing the rights of citizens in democratic institutions and processes. Dalwai, who was recently



rediscovered and popularised by historian Ramachandra Guha, argued that the secularism of Hindus who treated Muslims as a minority encouraged the anti-secularism of Muslims, and that minorities in a democracy like India had equal rights, not special privileges. Unfortunately, Dalwai died at the young age of 44 in 1977 and a great hope for Islamic reform in India was lost prematurely. The paths shown by Sir Syed and Dalwai are worth emulating.

Given the nature of the problem India and other countries are facing from the jihadist onslaught, it is essential that various countries adopt a long-term strategy to counter radicalisation among Muslims. On its part, India needs to ensure that mosques and madrassas are regulated and their sources of funding audited by government officials. While the role of the Quran and Hadiths in influencing Muslims cannot be eliminated from Muslim societies, it is very much possible to push ordinary Muslims onto a path in which they begin to question at least those of their beliefs which are openly inimical to other communities. Therefore, any reform must also aim at preparing a primer that teaches Muslim children from elementary level about the great thinkers of India and the world, thereby promoting liberal arts and free speech.

However, the Western governments, which are facing the threat of radicalisation in their societies, need to also realise that German fascism was militarily defeated before it was abandoned by the next generation of German youths. Similar is the case with communism, which had to be militarily defeated before policymakers could shed their long-held beliefs on models of development for people. Thanks to the exemplary global leadership of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, the fall of the Berlin Wall became a reality, thereby unshackling the Indian mind too from its six decades of Nehruvian framework. Unfortunately, there appears to be no global leader today who can effectively meet the challenge of radical Islamism across the world. The first task for the international community is to defeat global jihadism militarily. The next step – that is for future generations of Muslims to shed their exclusionary beliefs – will inevitably follow this.

# In Defence of Free Speech

Sixty-five years ago on January 26, when we the people of India gave ourselves the constitution, we adopted a new way of life defined by individual liberties, secured by free speech. In the 7th century, when the Prophet Muhammad proclaimed Islam, he too gave the world a way of life, but let us first go hundreds of years before him to one of his ancestors, Abraham. In the Muslim imagination, his story is etched as such: as a youngster, Abraham had a questioning mind about god. Once as everyone left the village for a festival, he entered the temple, beheaded the idols and hung up his axe on the biggest idol. When people returned, they demanded an explanation from him to which he replied: ask your big idol. Their religious sentiments hurt, they threw Abraham into the fire. Abraham had just exercised liberty of thought and expression: free speech, which is essential to the legitimacy of democracies.

Cartoonists – writers, prophets, actors, painters, journalists and playwrights – play a meaningful role in society. They question social tenets, challenge religious orthodoxies, force people to rethink long-held ideas and shatter the idolatries of their times, thereby upgrading the software of ideas of existing societies and enabling them to adopt new paths to common benefits. However, in doing so, these agents of change become outsiders in their social midst, and they are ridiculed, ostracised and exiled – or are killed like the cartoonists in the January 7 attack on the French weekly *Charlie Hebdo*. In India, young couples who defy social norms to marry across caste and religious boundaries are cartoonists of our times who chart new life ways, defend free speech by their actions.

At great personal risk, Abraham proclaimed monotheism, which informs Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Muhammad meditated at Mount Hira, found enlightenment, emerged and proclaimed Islam, a new set of beliefs. At risk to his life, Muhammad disagreed with the

people of Mecca, mocked their gods and questioned their religious beliefs. By doing so, he seeded a new civilisation distinct from the lifestyles of Meccans, who saw him as a dangerous individual and refused to listen to him; nevertheless he fought dozens of wars against them to establish a new world order. Both Abraham and Muhammad were lawbreakers, and launched wars of civilisation for their times and birthed the clash of civilisations, which American political scientist Samuel Huntington has observed in the world in recent years.

The jihadists who killed the cartoonists of *Charlie Hebdo* have many sympathisers among Muslim youth across India as evidenced from their posts on Facebook. Expressions of beliefs are accepted tenets of democracies, but incitement to murder is no free speech. You have a right to free speech, but a limitation kicks in only when it harms others. In Hyderabad, Islamic cleric Maulana Naseeruddin used free speech to hold a funeral prayer for the Paris attackers, but his statement that anyone guilty of blasphemy be murdered is unacceptable. On December 26, the Mumbai-based *Urdu Times* daily published an article which cited Quranic verses and several books of Hadiths (traditions of Muhammad) to argue that Muslims converting to Hinduism in *ghar wapsi* [homecoming initiated by Hindutva groups] should be killed. We stand for the free speech of jihadists, but oppose their incitement to murder.

In all societies, people do have free speech but they do not exercise it. So, free speech begins the moment someone challenges it. Muhammad's right to free speech kicked in the moment the anti-Muhammads of Mecca opposed him. The French cartoonists' free speech started the day they were challenged. Free speech becomes necessary for the reason it is challenged. Free speech is unlimited because it is unlimited for Islamic clerics. Free speech is absolute because it is absolute for jihadists. Free speech must be defended from the moment a friend or a local tough opposes it. Free speech must be defended because the lack of it is the reason why Muslim communities' progress is blocked. It must be defended because our inability to do so stuns Muslim societies. Absence of free speech prevents self-reflection among Muslims.

Freedom of expression and creativity has empowered individuals to discover the wheel, steam engine, surgery, ships, planes, Internet and our travel to Moon and very soon to Mars. Philosophers, cartoonists and prophets have exemplified this point. In 399 BCE, Greek philosopher Socrates was accused of corrupting the youth and chose to drink hemlock against the offer to choose silence. In 1633, Galileo was

punished for arguing correctly that the earth revolves round the sun. In 1989, Iranian cleric Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against Salman Rushdie. A book must be published for the precise reason that some do not want it to be published. A cartoon must be drawn for the exact reason that some do not want it to be drawn. Free speech must be protected because some are protesting against it. Free speech must be defended because if we do not, the anti-cartoonists, anti-Abrahams, and anti-Muhammads will dictate our minds, our thought and our actions. Free speech is the engine of civilisation. We cannot draw a line on free speech, especially if someone wants us to draw a line.

If we allow jihadists to win, it will next invite murder. Certain values are non-negotiable for our democratic era. "Without freedom to criticise," writes British philosopher Nigel Warburton, "democracies might degenerate into tyrannies." Free speech must be defended because we are witnessing the rise of tyranny: people and groups think it is right to ban books, banish painters, murder cartoonists. When we oppose the anti-cartoonists, we do it for ourselves. The fight for free speech is between those who want to drag us backward and those who want to propel us to Mars and beyond.

The rise of tyranny threatens the democratic future of our children. Certain Islamic beliefs harm not only Muslims but also non-Muslims. Muslim girls are sometimes forced to wear burqa and the criticisms about the rigid, tortoise-like structures that let this happen hold a lot of water. In 1950 we gave ourselves the constitution, which requires us to make a stand for women's equality too.

# **SECTION VIII**

## Combating Global Jihadism



# The Rise of Islamism in the World

**I**slamism is a cultural and political movement aimed at eradicating secular and democratic ethos of a society in a bid to pave the way for Islamic ascendancy. It introduces exhibitionist religiosity in people's lives: the problem is not in a woman wearing the burqa but the body of religious and political ideas that makes her choose such a dress code. Subsequently, these ideas begin to strike at the roots of individual liberty, women's freedom, rights of non-Muslims and a free press. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines Islamism as an "Islamic revivalist movement, often characterised by moral conservatism, literalism, and the attempt to implement Islamic values in all spheres of life". It is pertinent here to look at recent examples of how Islamism unfolds in everyday life.

In 2010, Islamists in Kerala chopped off the hand of college lecturer T.J. Joseph for setting a question paper which they deemed as disrespecting to the Prophet Muhammad. In 2011, Islamists led by Syed Ahmed Bukhari forced an exhibition on the "Koran in 53 languages", organised by Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Delhi, to be shut. Not long ago, actor-producer Kamal Hassan was compelled by Islamists in Tamil Nadu to edit his movie *Vishwaroopam* for showing that jihadists recited Quranic verses before launching attacks. In May, tens of thousands of Bangladeshis led by the Islamist group Hefajat-e-Islam marched through Dhaka, demanding stricter blasphemy laws. The Pakistani media is full of reports of Hindu girls being converted to Islam forcibly, Christians being accused of blasphemy, homes and mosques of Ahmadi Muslims being vandalised, and Shias being declared infidels and murdered.

In Egypt, Islamists are targeting Christians through lawsuits, accusing them of blaspheming against Islam, and liberal Muslims are quitting government jobs. In Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, they killed a man for selling alcohol recently. In Tunisia, Islamists desecrated Jewish

cemeteries and attacked art galleries and cinemas. In Turkey, Islamists stabbed couples who kissed in an Ankara metro station to protest against moral policing by the authorities. To make a point, Turkey is building a \$100-million mega mosque in America. Jordan is witnessing public demonstrations by Islamists. In a British prison, an Islamist inmate recruited two others to beat up guards in May.

The binding factor in all these cases is Islam. Jihadists of the al-Qaeda variety and Islamists share the same ideological objectives, the only distinction being that the former are armed and consider themselves fighting on a battlefield against infidels. Their goal is to establish sharia rule. Islamism is the softer face of jihadism, sometimes masquerading as liberal Islam in our midst.

Driven by an ideological longing to revive the glory of the Islamic caliphate, Islamists are open to using Western tools of election, constitution and the rule of law in introducing Islam in a country's politics, governance, literature, culture and architecture. Their tactic is to win an election, rewrite a country's constitution to make it compliant with Islam and begin Islamising. Inspired by the success of Islamists in the Arab Spring, even the Taliban are open to using referendums and elections as a tactic.

Last March, Mullah Agha Jan Mutasim, Mullah Omar's aide, indicated that the Taliban might form a party. "We must launch a political movement to achieve the goals for which we have made so many sacrifices," he noted. Inspired by the rise of Egyptian Islamists, Bareilvi scholar Tahirul Qadri returned to Pakistan last December from his self-exile in Canada to engineer a Cairo-like mass uprising in Islamabad, unsuccessfully though, to grab power. "Far from rendering Islamism unnecessary," writes US academic John M. Owen IV, "the Arab Spring has increased its credibility."

In the past, Islamists have tried to revive the glory of Islam in the political sphere. Such efforts were dubbed as revivalism, fundamentalism, political Islam, extremist Islam, radical Islam and the like. In the modern democratic era, Islamism is emerging as a distinct attempt to comprehend the meanings of power in all its industrial, corporate and military complexities, as signified by the West.

On the danger of Islamism in the post-9/11 years, noted Islamic affairs expert Francis Robinson has said: "[Islamists] understood the issue of power, but in engaging with the West they were deemed to be willing to sacrifice too much that was essential to Islam and Muslim culture. Islamists saw the real danger as Western civilisation itself.



Their real enemies were the secular or modernist elites in Muslim societies who collaborated with Western political, economic and cultural forces.”

Commenting on the phenomenon of Islamism, Mehdi Mozaffari of the University Aarhus observes: “Prior to the Islamist Revolution in Iran in 1978-79, the terms ‘Islamism’ and ‘Islamists’ are... practically absent from the vocabulary of newspaper reporters.” Now, Islamism is becoming vigorous. For the Islamist parties that rose to power in the Arab Spring, the prototype was readily available from Iran with regard to policies implemented after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, from Turkey where the Justice and Development Party won the 2002 elections and is removing liberal influences from public life, and from Gaza where Hamas captured power through elections to impose sharia.

In its new avatar, Islamism is also a legal attempt to redefine the relationship between Islam and the state, and between the state and its citizens. In 2011, former Islamist Maajid Nawaz observed: “Islamism is the idea that seeks to implement one interpretation of Islam over the rest of society by law. Some Islamists seek to do this through politicking and others through violence.”

In the wake of the Arab Spring, Cairo-based journalist Heba Saleh wrote that Islamism did not represent a “broad range of opinion” of people to evolve consensus on government policymaking. In the conception of Islamists, non-Muslim citizens are not permitted to govern or head an Islamic state. Kevin B. Anderson, an expert on the Iranian Revolution, sums it up thus: Islamism has “many features and faces, everywhere it is anti-feminist, everywhere it is authoritarian, and everywhere it is intolerant of other religions”.

# The Phenomenon of Hindu Terrorism

On November 10, 2010, Mohan Bhagwat, the chief of the Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, or the National Volunteer Organisation), criticised the centrist Indian government for unleashing a campaign alleging the involvement of "Hindu terrorists" in several bomb blasts in predominantly Muslim towns in recent years. He said that neither Hindus nor the RSS had ever been "synonymous with terrorism".

The RSS was established in the 1920s as a patriotic organisation, against British rule and Muslim separatism in India. Over the past decades, it has emerged as the mother of almost all Hindu nationalist organisations, including Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is the country's main right-wing opposition; Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, or World Hindu Council); Bajrang Dal; Shiv Sena; Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP, or All India Students Council), which is the student wing of the BJP; Hindu Jagran Manch; and Shri Ram Sene. These Hindu organisations are collectively known as Sangh Parivar, i.e. the RSS family, though it is not essential that they are organisationally connected to each other.

India's Minister for Women, Renuka Chowdhury, described an attack on a pub by the Shri Ram Sene as an attempt to "Talibanise" India.

The RSS chief's statement against equating terrorism with Hindus follows the arrests of several RSS-linked individuals for their role in a number of bomb blasts at the holy places of Indian Muslims. Currently, a huge controversy is raging in India over whether these individuals should be called "Hindu terrorists" even as the Indian media is using the term "Hindu terrorist" to describe those arrested in connection with the attacks on Muslim shrines and mosques, which were initially blamed on Indian Islamic terrorists.

Internationally and in India, there is a contentious debate over whether terrorism should be identified by religious affiliation, e.g. as

Islamic or Hindu terrorists. However, not all terrorists are described by religious identity, whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian. In Pakistan, Muslims fighting for the independence of Balochistan province are known as Balochi nationalist militants – but the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters are described as Islamic terrorists because they are fighting for the enforcement of Islamic sharia. In Sri Lanka, fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) are not called Hindu terrorists. In Northern Ireland, Protestant or Catholic groups were not considered to be Christian terrorists, because they were not fighting to establish a Christian state.

In India itself, not all militants are described as Hindu terrorists. For example, leftist rebels are described as Maoist militants, or simply leftist rebels. However, Indian Muslim militants are dubbed Islamic terrorists, as they are fighting for an elusive Islamic victory.

Be all that as it may, the use of the term "Hindu terrorism" has rattled the RSS, the BJP and other Hindu organisations in India, as all of them view themselves as true nationalists.

### **Hindu Terrorism**

In recent decades, India has witnessed several types of terrorism: a) Pakistan-backed terrorism in Kashmir and the rest of India, carried out by mainly Pakistani and Kashmiri terrorists; b) armed communist movements led by Naxalites, or the leftist guerrillas fighting against state institutions in several Indian states; c) Indian Islamic militants, who are connected mainly to the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) – a purely indigenous Indian group which broke away from the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and has developed links internationally and, in recent decades, to Pakistan; d) Pakistani-Indian terrorist groups, a new breed of Indian-sounding groups such as Indian Mujahideen and Deccan Mujahideen, which were created in a bid by Pakistani intelligence and jihadist groups to deflect international criticism against Pakistan for supporting terrorism in India.

A decision by the Indian government to extend a ban on SIMI for an additional two years was confirmed by a Delhi court in August this year. Detailed information about Indian Mujahideen and Deccan Mujahideen are yet to come to light fully. Some militants arrested in India in recent years have been described as belonging to Indian Mujahideen and Deccan Mujahideen, with their connections trailing to Pakistan. It seems that Pakistani groups have succeeded in roping in some Indian Muslim youth, who were disaffected by the 2002 anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat, where the right-wing BJP is in power.

The term Deccan, meaning "south", refers to the "southern" Indian city of Hyderabad, which is described by people in Pakistan as Hyderabad Deccan, as there is another Hyderabad town in Pakistan. An Indian will not call Hyderabad as Hyderabad Deccan, and therefore there is a strong likelihood that the name Deccan Mujahideen was coined by a Pakistani national.

However, recent terrorist attacks that have turned the focus of public debate on "Hindu terrorism" include the February 18, 2007, blast on the Samjhauta Express (a train service between India and Pakistan); the May 18, 2007, blast in the Mecca mosque in the town of Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh; the October 11, 2007, blast at the shrine of 12th century Sufi mystic Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in the town of Ajmer in Rajasthan; and the September 29, 2008, blast in the town of Malegaon in Maharashtra state of which Mumbai is the capital. These are the key attacks in which Hindu terrorists are believed to be involved, though a number of militant attacks in India have taken place in recent decades whose trails lead to Pakistan.

### **The Abhinav Bharat Group**

The first time Hindu terrorists came under the eyes of Indian counterterrorism investigators was the September 29, 2008, Malegaon blast. A day after the blast, the Indian police, which had prior intelligence information about this attack, ruled out the possibility of the involvement of Indian Mujahideen while noting that they suspected "Hindu radical groups". Additional Director General of Police Sanjeev Dayal told the media that the blast did not have the signature of Indian Mujahideen, adding: "Hindu radical groups are on our radar."

A month later, three individuals – Shyam Lal, Dilip Nahar and Dharmendra Bairagi (none of them Muslims) – were arrested from the town of Indore in Madhya Pradesh. Their arrests came because of their role in the theft of a motorbike that was used in the attack. On October 23, the police arrested several people, including Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, a 38-year-old Hindu woman mystic or ascetic, who is the accused and an ABVP member.

Shortly thereafter, the police arrested Ramesh Shivji Upadhyay – a 57-year-old retired Indian Army major, and Sameer Sharad Kulkarni, another ABVP member. Major Upadhyay is reported to have imparted military training to Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur. Some text messages sent to retired Major Upadhyay from the mobile phone of serving Indian Army officer Lt.-Col. Shrikant Purohit led to the latter's arrest.

The arrest of Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur and of retired and serving Indian Army officers stunned the people of India. The arrest of a serving officer has raised questions about extremist elements in the Indian Army.

An Indian media report noted that "the involvement of Hindu groups in terror activities was suspected" following a number of unexplained bombings in mosques in the towns of Parbhani (2003), Jalna (2004) and Purna (2004). Currently, 11 individuals are in police custody in connection with the Malegaon blast case. On July 19, 2010, the Bombay High Court upheld charges against them; among them were Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur and Lt.-Col. Shrikant Purohit. According to one report, Purohit is a founding member of Abhinav Bharat, or Young India, a radical Hindu organisation that has been at the centre of attacks on Indian Muslim religious places. Upadhyay, the retired major, was the working president of Abhinav Bharat at the time of his arrest, based in the town of Pune, near Mumbai.

Abhinav Bharat was founded a century ago by Hindu nationalist leader V D Savarkar to fight against the British rule, but dissolved in 1952, five years after Indian independence. Following the arrests in the Malegaon blast case, it was revealed that like-minded Hindu groups had revived Abhinav Bharat formally in 2006. Lt.-Col. Shrikant Purohit told a court that Pravin Togadia, secretary-general of VHP, or World Hindu Council, was involved in financing and reviving Abhinav Bharat. Himani Savarkar, the current president of Abhinav Bharat and niece of Nathuram Godse (who assassinated Mahatma Gandhi), told the media: "We do not support any kind of terrorism. But at the same time we want to make it clear that Hindus will not tolerate atrocities committed on them."

### **Countrywide Attacks**

Lt.-Col. Shrikant Purohit was also questioned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in connection with the May 18, 2007, blast at the Mecca mosque in Hyderabad. An Indian newspaper cited CBI documents as noting: "[During interrogation] Purohit claimed to have met Pragya [Singh Thakur] on October 5, 2008, to tell her that 'our people' had carried out the killings in Orissa, burnt down two churches in Karnataka, and also carried out the Malegaon blast." The reference is to a series of attacks on Christians in the Kandhamal district of the eastern Indian state of Orissa (now Odisha) and on churches in the southern state of Karnataka.

There has been a pattern to this violence: these attacks on the Christian minority in Orissa and Karnataka and on Muslims in Gujarat came at a time when the BJP, the right-wing Hindu opposition, has been in power or has shared power in these states. In other words, these attacks could not have been carried out without some involvement of law-enforcement agencies – or without their turning a blind eye to the attackers. Lt.-Col. Purohit is also reported to have held a planning meeting at the Bhonsala Military School in the town of Nashik in Maharashtra. The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Maharashtra also detained Colonel (retired) SS Raikar, an official of the military school, for questioning.

A number of Hindu militants have been arrested in connection with the Mecca mosque blast and the Ajmer shrine blast. All these cases are being tried by various courts in India. In June this year, the CBI added one Sunil Joshi, a member of the RSS, to the list of the accused in the 2007 Mecca mosque blast. The accused already include four RSS members in the Mecca mosque blast case: Ramchandra Kalsangra aka Ramji, Sandeep Dange, Devender Gupta and Lokesh Sharma.

In Rajasthan, where the October 11, 2007, Ajmer shrine blast case is under trial, the police have named but not indicted senior RSS leader Indresh Kumar as one of the key conspirators. An 806-page indictment filed by the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of Rajasthan also includes five militants of a radical Hindu group. According to the indictment, Indresh Kumar "took part in a secret meeting of right-wing fundamentalists in October 2005 in [the town of] Jaipur at which plans to carry out bomb blasts" at the Ajmer shrine, Mecca mosque and Malegaon were finalised.

Of all these attacks, the February 18, 2007, Samjhauta Express blast is international in nature, as the train passengers were Pakistani nationals travelling from India to Pakistan. At least 68 people were killed in the blast near Panipat, about 80 kilometres from New Delhi. According to one report, Lt.-Col. Purohit supplied explosives that were used in the Samjhauta Express blast. Although the role of Hindu militants is suspected in the blast, the investigators have yet to find conclusive evidence. In July 2010, the investigation of the case was handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), a multi-agency investigator that was established after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

### **Conclusion**

The trail of most of these attacks leads to a single nucleus of terror planning, with the key accused being Lt.-Col. Shrikant Purohit, retired

major Ramesh Shivji Upadhyay, and Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur. Even after the cell involving Hindu terrorists was uncovered by investigators, some militant attacks have taken place in which the role of Hindu groups is suspected. For example, in October 2009, the police arrested four persons with links to extremist Hindu organisations following a bomb blast in the town of Margao, Goa.

Home Minister P. Chidambaram of the ruling Congress party used the words "saffron terrorism" to describe Hindu terrorism in India, blaming Hindu groups for the recent bomb blasts in several Indian cities. Saffron is the colour of flags used by Hindu nationalist groups. Urging Indian citizens to be vigilant against extremist Hindu groups, Chidambaram said: "Saffron terrorism is a new phenomenon that has been implicated in many bomb blasts in recent past." In turn, the RSS, the BJP and other Hindu groups accused the ruling party of launching a political campaign against them. Addressing a public meeting in October 2010, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat took strong exception to the use of the terms "saffron terrorism" and "Hindu terrorism", stating: "Terrorism and Hindus are [an] oxymoron and can never be related to each other."

However, Digvijay Singh, secretary-general of the Congress party, reminded the RSS of its earlier statement that "all Muslims are not terrorists but all terrorists are Muslims" and added: "All Hindus arrested for terror activities are linked to the RSS." Following the arrest of serving army officer Lt.-Col. Purohit in the Malegaon bombing case, a small group of Indian Army officers came under surveillance. A report noted: "The officers who have been put under surveillance appear to have a lot in common with Purohit. The foremost similarity... was the seething anger among them about nothing being done to protect the 'Hindu Rashtra' [Hindu nation] against jihadi terrorists and other threats, and a strong desire to avenge the serial blasts allegedly carried out by [Pakistan-supported] jihadi bombers."

The phenomenon of Hindu terrorism can be described, to some extent, as a reaction against Islamic militancy in India. On June 18, 2008, over three months before the Malegaon blast, an editorial in *Saamna*, a paper published by extremist Hindu party Shiv Sena of Maharashtra in which Malegaon is situated, had warned: "Islamic terrorism is increasing in Hindustan [India] and to confront this Islamic terrorism, Hindu terrorism of equal strength has to be evolved. Like the Islamic extremists, unless there are Hindu suicide bombers to protect the nation...."

In 2014 elections, Shiv Sena became a part of the ruling coalition led by the BJP in Maharashtra state. Both the coalition partners were not on good terms despite sharing power in the state. In August 2015, Shiv Sena once again brought into open the issue of "Hindu suicide bombers". An editorial in *Saamna* of August 18 observed: "Hindus should be able to live in this country with pride and his (a Hindu's) voice should roar like that of a lion. If an answer has to be given to Pakistani extremists, Hindus will also have to become highly religious. To answer Pakistan, Hindus need to become human bombs and invade their country...." This advocacy by Shiv Sena on the need for Hindu suicide bombers is essentially theoretical.



# Liberty in Peril in Bangladesh

**F**rom Indonesia to Egypt, Islamists are out to enforce their ideology on the rest of society in which they breathe. In Bangladesh, they are led by Hefajat-e-Islam, a coalition of a dozen Islamic organisations supported by over 25,000 madrassas. Hefajat-e-Islam, or saving Islam, did not exist before 2010, but in an illustration of how quickly Islamist forces can organise, it has grown substantially over three and a half years, establishing branches in major towns, enjoying support from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, or BNP, and notwithstanding ideological differences, attracting organisational backing from Jamaat-e-Islami whose central leaders have been convicted of the 1971 war crimes.

Hefajat-e-Islam burst on the scene in February against the Shahbagh movement led by liberal bloggers demanding the death penalty for the convicts, especially Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Kader Mollah whose life sentence was seen as too soft. Since then, Hefajat-e-Islam supporters have attacked liberal bloggers and journalists, made Taliban-style diktats against women, organised protests and violence and laid siege to Dhaka, thereby challenging liberal groups and weakening the secular government of Sheikh Hasina.

As Bangladesh goes to polls no later than January 24, the Awami League-led government faces defeat, having failed to meet people's expectations. The BNP, unable to find a foothold a few years ago, is energised by the new anti-government impetus created by Hefajat-e-Islam. BNP-led leaders, some supported by Hefajat-e-Islam activists, have registered huge victories in recent mayoral elections. The BNP-led alliance appears set to form the next government.

During 2001-2006, when the BNP was in power, Jamaat-e-Islami-led Islamists and militants of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh thrived, at least until August 17, 2005, when militants exploded 300 bombs throughout Bangladesh. If the BNP captures power, Jamaat-e-

Islami and Hefajat-e-Islam will find a hospitable environment for the next five years. But the war on the streets of Bangladesh is not merely an electoral war.

In 1971, Bangladeshis fought a war of liberation, but the war raging now involves ideas and values of a different kind, mixes religion and politics, and aims to convert people to Islamism. It will shape the ideas of how Bangladeshi society look like in the minds of youth. Some of these ideas are contained in 13 demands unveiled by Hefajat-e-Islam: retain the phrase “absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah” in the constitution, a blasphemy law stipulating the death penalty for sacrilegious words or actions against Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, punishment for “atheist” bloggers and anti-Islamists, Pakistan-like law declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims, ban on foreign culture and intermingling of men and women, disallowance of sculptures at public places, and a ban on “anti-Islam activities” by NGOs, Ahmadis and Christian missionaries.

These Taliban-like demands militate against the principles of democracy. If these were to be implemented, Bangladesh would look like Pakistan. Liberty is in peril, threatened by these heretics of modern civilisation.

Let us look at ideas being propagated by Hefajat-e-Islam leader Shah Ahmad Shafi, who graduated from Darul Uloom Deoband in India. In a video, he tells a religious congregation in Chittagong that girls should be educated only till 4-5 grade just in order for them to maintain the accounts for their husbands; women should remain within the four walls of their homes and should not go shopping or intermingle with men; girls using mobile phones and sitting in front benches in classrooms give wrong messages to male students; women are like tamarind causing men's mouth and heart to secrete saliva; elderly men who say they do not lust after seeing women are impotent; birth control is making men infertile and stitching up wombs; the Prophet Muhammad said that on the Day of Judgment he would be proud that his followers would be double than those of Jesus and therefore Muslims should marry a second, third and fourth woman. Bangladesh affairs expert Taj Hashmi said: “People must realise that the Hefajat and Jamaat are the two sides of the same coin. Despite their mutual differences, these undemocratic, fascistic, premodern forces can unite to the detriment of freedom, democracy, and rights of women, minorities and liberal Muslims.”

Democracies are systems that secure liberty for all. Recent history suggests that democracies too need defending and wars play an

essential role in shaping civilisation. If the the Allies had lost against Hitler at the end of World War II, Nazis, fascists and Islamists would be today's big powers. At the end of Cold War, if the Soviet Union were not thrashed, especially in Afghanistan, communism and associated forms of authoritarianism would have gained ground considerably. Over a decade into the 21st century, which was hailed at its onset as modern civilisation, democracies still need defending, this time from Islamists who are extending their influence in several parts of the world, affecting the lives of 1.6 billion Muslims to lead an existence in the manner they desire.

At this stage in the history of civilisation, Islamists are nursing a presupposition that humans are without rights and rational thinking, with god having already defined all spheres of their life. This presupposition is a threat to civilisation.

Unlike Pakistan, where the lack of a cultural substance to its nationalism lends strength to Islamism and jihadism, Bangladesh is an ethnically homogeneous nation where Islamism will find it difficult to usurp the role of language and culture in redefining its national identity and cannot play a sustainable role in setting its political agenda. For now, it is comforting that across South Asia, Islamist parties have not shown success in winning elections. It indicates that South Asian Muslims view Islam as a personal affair. The Hefajat-e-Islam's moral standing will erode, says Bangladeshi journalist Shakeel Anwar, as its supporters in the countryside begin to explicitly see its political collaboration with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

# Afghanistan After US Troops Withdrawal

Afghanistan's near future holds promise, but a discussion of how the years will unfold after the 2014 US troops withdrawal from that country cannot begin without understanding Pakistan's overriding interferences. On April 16, 2011, the entire Pakistani military and political leadership arrived in Kabul. The delegation included, by order of importance, Inter-Services Intelligence chief Lt.-Gen. Shuja Pasha, Army chief General Ashfaq Kayani, Interior Minister Rehman Malik, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, junior Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar, and others. The only top leader left in Pakistan was President Asif Zardari.

Four days later, *Roznama Jasarat* carried the headline: "(Afghanistan told it) will have to follow our strategy, Pakistan's stern message to Afghanistan." The news item read: "Gilani delivered a stern message from Pakistan to the Karzai government saying that Afghanistan will have to consult with Pakistan regarding the number and training of its security forces. Development projects in the country should be transparent; the future governments in Afghanistan will have to follow the Pakistani strategy; Pakistanis should be recruited in (Afghan) government institutions; and Afghanistan will inform Pakistan about any pact signed with the Western allies."

Pakistani analysts routinely denounce India's developmental role in Afghanistan, but these demands revealed a Pakistani mindset aimed at total colonisation of Afghanistan. For a lay reader, it might be shocking to know that Pakistan should ask for Pakistani nationals to be recruited into Afghan institutions, but during the Taliban rule, Pakistani citizens were indeed appointed to Afghan government positions. During the Kabul talks, it was also agreed to set up a two-tier joint commission, allowing the Pakistani intelligence to engage in Kabul's policymaking. *The News* on April 17, 2011, reported, "The chief executives of both countries, as well as army chiefs, heads of intelligence agencies, and

foreign and interior ministers will comprise the first tier of the commission....” The *Roznama Ummat* of April 20 summed up in a front-page headline: “Afghanistan embraces Pakistan’s security establishment.” Later evidence suggests that Hamid Karzai was smarter than them.

Now, it can be said that Nawaz Sharif is a democrat and does not intend to colonise Afghanistan. It can be argued back that Asif Zardari too is a sincere democrat, but his government surrendered before the ISI. But Sharif is not shaping Pakistani foreign policy. The attacks on the Indian consulate in Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan and the killing of Indian soldiers denote one thing: that the ISI retains command.

On August 17, BBC Urdu reported a sudden rise in Pakistani beggars arriving in Kabul, with passports and visas! The failure of the Doha talks with the Taliban emanated from suspicions, among other reasons, that the ISI had convinced the United States to divide Afghanistan. Karzai’s August 26 visit to Islamabad was merely a goodwill gesture. Before and after 9/11, Pakistan has defied several United Nations Security Council resolutions by not ceasing to host and aid al-Qaeda, the Taliban and Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Here is a primer on Pakistan’s Afghan policy: during the 1980s, the ISI and the US supported the mujahideen against the Soviets; during the 1990s, Pakistan recognised the Taliban regime in Kabul; during the 2000s, Pakistan’s Afghan policy was in disarray after the Taliban were removed from power following 9/11; from early 2006, the ISI used the Taliban to explode improvised explosive devices, causing a sharp rise in American casualties every year. In coming years, ISI-backed jihadi organisations will persist at destabilising Afghanistan. However, a point often neglected in the understanding of why the post-Soviet governments fell in Kabul is that their main backer, the USSR, broke up.

One of the many positive achievements for Afghanistan is that this time there is no Soviet control over Afghanistan. The US will likely keep 6,000-9,000 troops past 2014, along with 5,000 NATO soldiers. The US-led international community, and allies like India, will engage with Kabul, strengthening the Afghan state. Iran, too, will not like the Taliban’s return to power, though its support to Afghan Shia groups could force Saudis to offer counter-support to Sunni jihadis. Second, over the past half a century, elections have irreversibly shaped a nation’s destiny positively. The Afghan presidential election will yield a new leader, instilling new confidence among Afghans.

In today’s information age, this is important enough for the cohesiveness of the Afghan state. The Taliban are willing to talk, a

testimony to this real change. Third, the biggest achievement is a 350,000-strong Afghan army which is fighting against the Taliban. Recently, Afghan troops responded superbly to terror attacks; they have been in operational lead throughout the country, with American troops in a supporting role. Fourth, corruption and joblessness are big threats for Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the achievements include 10 million children going to school, most of them girls, up from 900,000 in 2001. Over 4,000 schools have been set up since 2001. Of 27 million Afghans, 20 million have mobile phones; 80 per cent Afghan women use mobiles. There are 150 radio stations and 50 TV channels. These factors enforce the nation's overall unity and progress.

The truth is that the Afghan war will not end in 2014 and the Taliban will survive as a terror network. All wars end differently: the 1953 Korean war ended in a stalemate and remains a threat half a century later; the 1971 war ended in a decisive victory, creating Bangladesh; three India-Pakistan wars have not resolved any issues; the 1990 Iraq war did not yield anything, but only caused a delayed military action in 2003 to remove Saddam Hussein.

A Baghdad-like scenario is unfolding in Afghanistan, marked by jailbreaks, assassinations and frequent bombings, which will challenge Afghanistan's stability. The Taliban-ISI alliance will give birth to newer jihadi groups. Over the next decade if the ISI does not change its course, Pakistan will look like the Afghanistan of the 1980s.

# Threats to Britain's Open Society

**F**or several hundred years, people have thought of Britain as the epitome of modern civilisation and Enlightenment values whose rule of law, individual freedom and democracy served as a model to the rest of the world. In the early decades of the 21st century, this image has taken a beating, with some pockets of Britain being transformed into enclaves administered by Islamic clerics associated with different mosques and madrassas.

The Darul Uloom madrassa in the village of Chislehurst, modelled after India's Darul Uloom Deoband, seeks to produce "an Islamic elite who will rule the Muslim world" – as reported by British Indian journalist Edna Fernandes, who also reported that music, drama and modern foreign languages are deemed un-Islamic, and Shakespeare is seen as evil for his dealing with subjects like love and revenge. Mufti Muhammad ibn Adam of Darul Iftaa, an Islamic institute in Leicester, delivers fatwas such as driving a taxi is forbidden by Islam because it may entail taking passengers to a pub. Such fatwas impinge on individual freedom, a fundamental basis of modern societies.

In 2008, Wesley Paxton of a teachers' union warned that faith schools were causing segregation in Britain. "More faith schools is probably going to mean more Islamic schools," he said. There are 166 madrassas, engendering segregation along religious lines in British society. The madrassas and mosques, established by Islamic clerics coming from Pakistan and other Muslim countries, are run along sectarian lines such as Barelvi, Deobandi, Ahmadi and Shia. Ahmadi Muslims, who found shelter in Britain following discrimination in Pakistan, are being denigrated by Pakistani clerics visiting Britain to deliver sermons, sowing seeds of sectarianism. Gender segregation prevails at campus events that are approved by British universities. Muslim students walk out of science classes on evolution, saying it conflicts with the Quran.

Islamic sharia law is enforced by clerics in parallel to the British law. In pockets of British society, Muslims do not report criminal cases to the police. Tom Winsor, chief inspector of the Constabulary, warned recently that Muslims did not call the police in cases as serious as honour killings, sexual assaults and murder, choosing instead to administer sharia-based criminal justice. Last month, Rebekah Dawson, standing trial for witness intimidation, refused to show her face before a court in London and was permitted to wear full-face veil. However, when told that she must remove the veil to give evidence, Dawson, a convert to Islam, decided not to take the witness box.

Reportedly, over 85 sharia courts operate in Britain, delivering verdicts that contradict British laws in cases of marriage, inheritance, child custody, polygamy, etc. In addition to sharia courts operating informally, the government in 2008 approved five sharia courts, in London, Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester and Nuneaton, allowing their rulings to be enforced through the British judicial system. Sajid Iqbal, a British journalist of Pakistani origin, warns that in the next 50 years, if these trends continue, sections of Muslims would likely have left the British justice system.

Informally, rulings are also issued by mosques and madrassas and enforced by Islamists. Last December, three Muslim youth were jailed for assaulting people on the streets of London's Bethnal Green area for not meeting sharia codes. Significantly, they were intimidating not Muslims, but non-Muslim couples for holding hands or girls for wearing skirts.

On the streets of London, vigilante Muslim youth enforce no-go areas, designated as sharia zones. Last December, dozens of Muslim men and women protested in London's Brick Lane, demanding that shops and restaurants stop selling alcohol. Muslim families from Pakistan take their daughters to their country and have them married without their consent. In the recent past, Muslim parents have killed daughters for going out with non-Muslim boys or simply for a night out. Inside British prisons, Islamists convert inmates to Islam and enforce the sharia code. In 2010, officials at the Long Lartin jail reported that non-Muslim inmates were forced by Muslim inmates to stop playing Western music and remove pictures of women from their cells.

In April 2013, a British Muslim woman, a relative of former Pakistani singer Junaid Jamshed, quit Islam and, writing under the pen name Layla Murad, reported that members of Al-Murabitun – an Islamic movement started by neo-Muslim and former Scottish playwright Ian Dallas – practise polygamy in modern Britain. In 2012,



the Islamic Sharia Council of Britain noted that Muslim career women were choosing to become second or third wives for varying reasons. Mizan Raja, a matrimonial consultant, reported that he received hundreds of calls from women asking about becoming second wives. At the end of 2013, the population of British Muslims was at 3.3 million, about 5.2 per cent of the United Kingdom's 63 million population. British Muslims have a young population. Journalist Ami Sedghi wrote recently that nearly half of all Muslims are aged under 25. There are concerns about sharia-inspired ideals being transmitted to the next generation of Muslims.

Muslim ghettoisation is also emerging as a concern. As immigrants move into an area, natives sell their homes and move to another area. While there are more possibilities of integration in London, Muslim ghettos are emerging in areas of Birmingham, Bradford, Leeds, Manchester, Oldham, Dewsbury and Leicester, says Sajid Iqbal. There is also great concern that London could look like Islamabad in the next five decades. In towns, politicians of Pakistani origin talk of the day when one of them will take residence at 10 Downing Street.

As Islamism looms in British society, these issues cannot be seen in isolation from Islam and immigration. Layla Murad, who studied at an Al-Murabitun-run seminary in Morocco, discovered that on a school holiday a Kareena Kapoor Bollywood number helped her bond with Moroccan women. Democracy is a model for multicultural countries, but in Britain, due to the British leadership's surrender before moral relativism, democracy appears to have lost its way under the Islamist assault.

# Boycott Saudi Arabia's Apartheid State

**I**t may escape people's attention, but Saudi Arabia is perhaps the only country named after an individual – Saud ibn Muhammad, the father of Muhammad ibn Saud, who, in alliance with Islamic preacher Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, founded the Saudi state in the 18th century. The contemporary Saudi Arabia was unified in 1932 by Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, who wrested the control of Hejaz, comprising the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, from the Hashemite family of the Prophet Muhammad. Saudi Arabia is also the worst violator of human rights. Look at it this way: the jihadist group Islamic State (formerly ISIS) is not the only entity beheading humans. Saudi Arabia regularly beheads people in a public square. Both ISIS and the Saudis execute humans in the name of Islam. By mid-April this year, Saudis beheaded over 40 people.

Modern civilisation is also characterised by the status of women in society. Going by Muslim practices and the statements of clerics, Islam restricts women's role in public space. In Saudi, according to the tenets of Islam, a woman cannot marry without the permission of a male guardian or go out without a male relative accompanying her. Women are forbidden from driving. Like a totalitarian state, Saudi Arabia tracks women from leaving the country. Women are only numbers: boys' schools have names, girls' schools are numbered. In a recent article, columnist Omaina Al-Khamis said: "The most recently opened girls' school in Riyadh has been named The 390th Elementary School.... Giving girls' schools numbers for names obliterates their identity."

In what is an assault on a woman's identity, in some Indian towns too we see girls as young as two and three being forced to wear the veil. The veil is not a piece of cloth; it represents an ideology that controls women's attitudes and beliefs. It curbs their aspirations. Saudi women can be unilaterally divorced by husbands; in India too it is no different

where the triple talaq is upheld by the courts as valid. Not many people know that it was some combative talk in defence of democratic rights after 9/11 by United States President George W Bush that forced the Saudis to introduce municipal elections. The franchise is limited to men, but some change is coming in favour of women.

Let alone elections, there are no political parties, trade unions or even a legislature worth its name in the country. Over 30 per cent of the people in Saudi Arabia are immigrants of various faiths, but Saudis do not permit non-Muslims to have their places of worship. Mecca, once a non-Muslim city, is allowed only for Muslim visitors. Discrimination against non-Muslims is sanctioned by the Saudi state, which permits citizenship only to those who believe in Islam. Shia Muslims, who comprise 15 per cent of the population, are harassed and excluded from top jobs. There is no place for dissent either: blogger Raif Badawi was awarded a punishment of 1,000 lashes for writing on free speech.

The British monarchy empowers its people; the Saudi monarchy cripples its citizens' ability to dream. Common Saudis cannot dream to write a blog let alone become governors. Unlike in democracies where a tea-seller can inspire millions to dream, an ordinary Saudi's dreams will remain just that, simple dreams.

According to Amnesty International, a tweet criticising the monarchy can land you in jail for 10 years and blogging can cost you your job. Human rights defenders are tried as terrorists and jailed for 15 years and the torture of prisoners is common. Minority Shias are awarded the death sentence for demonstrating against the government. Saudi Arabia, like Pakistan, decides people's faith: Ahmadi Muslims are declared non-Muslims. For ordinary Saudis, the king is more powerful than the almighty Allah.

Authoritarian states like Saudi Arabia, North Korea and Cuba do not trust their people; power essentially passes from the ruler to brothers and sons. In Saudi Arabia, top government posts are meant for 7,000 princes. All Saudi diplomats are also male. Global leaders surrender meekly before the Saudis. If once people trapped by tyranny looked to Washington, today America seems to have lost the power even to issue a statement against it.

Leftist academics and journalists routinely boycott Israel on some pretext, but they lack moral fibre when it comes to Saudi Arabia. Saudi diplomats routinely restrict rights activists from criticising the Saudi record at the United Nations. On the issue of Badawi, whose family is sheltered in Canada, the Saudis threatened the Canadian government not to interfere in Saudi Arabia's internal affairs.

Recently, Saudi diplomats blocked Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom from speaking on women's rights at an Arab League meet. After Wallstrom spoke up against it, Saudis stopped issuing visas to Swedes. The Arab League foreign ministers denounced Sweden, reminding that "the constitution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on sharia". Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven did not surrender and, at great economic cost, cancelled a defence pact with Saudi Arabia for violating human rights.

It is time Saudi Arabia was declared an apartheid state. Recently, US senator Rand Paul urged a boycott of Saudi Arabia, telling Americans: "Remember, when South Africa was misbehaving, we organised a boycott of South Africa. We should be boycotting Saudi Arabia." Indian diplomats at the UN too should take a moral stance on global issues.

# Erdoganism Leading to Jihadism in Turkey

**O**n April 24, Armenians organised events commemorating the killing of 1.5 million people by Ottoman Turkey a century ago. The massacre, occurring through World War I and until 1922, is dubbed as 20th century's first genocide. The scale of the massacre can be gauged from the fact that 10 million Armenians, more than three times the current population of Armenia, live abroad as their grandparents had to flee for their lives.

The Christian Armenia was under Ottoman rule. Turkey was heading the Islamic caliphate. From 1915 onwards, the Ottomans implemented a policy of expulsion and killing of Armenians, which has a parallel today in the killing of Baloch intellectuals by Pakistan. Images from that time show Ottoman soldiers rounding up Armenians and marching them to deserts and prisons. Recently, Turkey criticised Western nations for recognising the Armenian genocide.

In India, the Nizam of Hyderabad had sworn allegiance to the Ottoman caliph. According to Saqlain Imam, a senior Pakistani journalist based in London, after the secular leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk abolished the caliphate in 1924, the Nizam used to pay for the upkeep of the fallen caliph Sultan Abdul Majeed II. A daughter and a niece of the fallen caliph were married into the Nizam's family.

Around this time, Indian Muslims, led by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Mahatma Gandhi, supported the movement for the restoration of the caliphate, something the jihadist group Islamic State is trying to revive now. The Arabs, having been ruled and mistreated by the Ottomans, disliked Azad, though he was respected for his scholarship. Speeches were delivered in Mecca in which Maulana Azad was dubbed as Abul Kelab, or father of dogs.

After 1924, Ataturk put Turkey on a secular path, which is being reversed now. Turkey's Islamist turn has drawn international attention,

especially since Recep Tayyip Erdogan took over power, first serving as prime minister from 2003 and as president since last year.

The victory of Erdogan's Justice and Development Party in 2002 marked the rise of Islamists in Turkey. In terms of the policies implemented under him, Turkey's Islamism has also been described as Erdoganism, which has created a hospitable environment for Islamists and their armed ideological cousins, the jihadists. Turkey is one of the biggest centres of recruitment for ISIS. In a September 15 report, *The New York Times* estimated that "as many as 1,000 Turks have joined ISIS".

Alarmed by such reports, Turkish daily *Hurriyet* sent 11 journalists and photographers to five Turkish cities, and to France and Germany, to trace the paths taken by Turkish youth to join ISIS. The five cities considered recruitment hubs for ISIS are Gaziantep, Kocaeli, Ankara, Diyarbakır and Istanbul. In the Ciksorut area of Gaziantep, *Hurriyet* journalists were told by a grocer that "up to 4,000" local people had joined ISIS. In the Dilovasi area of Kocaeli, a coffee shop owner said "a thousand" youth had joined ISIS, though others put the number at 10. Some others noted that 3,000 Turks held top positions in ISIS. From the Hacıbayram area of Ankara, 100 youth joined ISIS, though those in denial put the number at three.

In Diyarbakır, journalists were told that ISIS's "main platforms for its organisational activities are Facebook, dervish lodges (dergah) and bookstores". In Istanbul, a youth who had joined al-Qaeda said: "[Hijra, or migration] is a religious obligation, just like jihad or daily prayers. Those who don't go will have troubles, not those who go. If a Muslim is hurt in the Arctic, we would go there too." From Germany, 200 citizens – a third of them of Turkish origin – joined ISIS. Some 1,000 French citizens too, many of them Turks, joined the jihad in Syria.

Some writers say it is not necessary that ISIS jihadists returning from Syria could pose threats to Turkey and Europe. But the fact is that top jihadist commanders in Somalia, Yemen, Syria and Iraq were trained in Afghanistan in the 1980s. If this serves as a template, Turkey could look like Afghanistan in the coming years. Along with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, Turkey is among the three key states that have aided the ISIS against Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

Here is how Erdogan's Islamism enters people's lives. He lifted the ban on headscarves in schools; he said women could not be equal to men, and urged women to have at least three children. He advocated alcohol-free zones, cracked down on secularists and journalists, directed schools to teach Turkish in Arabic script. Like the Taliban,

Erdogan objected to the use of the term “moderate Islam”, saying: “Islam cannot be classified as moderate or not.”

He argued that Muslims discovered America 300 years before Christopher Columbus did. He is building a \$100-million mega mosque near Washington, the money he could use to send 1,000 Turkish youth to study computer engineering in India or elsewhere. For Erdoganism, Islam matters, not the people. He seeks to revive the Ottoman caliphate even as his visions are being etched in stone in the grand presidential palace he is building.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said in Paris, “Islam, from Andalusia to the Ottoman Empire, is the most indigenous element of this [European] continent.” His deputy Bulent Arinc said women should not be heard laughing, just as some Islamic clerics across India say. Pro-government intellectual Nurettin Yildiz said: “A seven-year-old girl can be married. In Islam there is no age limitation to marriage.” A high school in Antalya asked male students to form teams to harass female students who wore skirts. Imam Mehmet Sait Yaz said in Diyarbakir: “The most rabid and savage enemies of Islam on earth are the Jews. Who says this? Allah says this.”

In January, memorial prayers were offered for the *Charlie Hebdo* attackers in Istanbul. But there seems to be not much distinction between Erdoganism and jihadism. Much like jihadists, Erdogan said, “Sovereignty unconditionally and always belongs to Allah.” Before becoming the prime minister, Erdogan publicly read a poem, “The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers.” Watch out for Turkey.

# Syrian Jihadi Blowback in European Societies

**I**n the next decade, Europe's free societies will see a loud and violent debate over questions of cultural and religious freedom. Signs of it are already emerging, with jihadis holding European passports returning from Syria. The impact of jihad on Europe is of unceasing concern to many, especially as the native populations are set to decline in the coming decades even as the share of immigrants grows. On June 29, bare-breasted members of the feminist group Femen barged into a Swedish mosque to highlight issues of liberty and women's rights in Muslim societies. Their chests were inked with slogans like "No sharia in Egypt and the world." Earlier, a Femen member climbed atop Tunisian Prime Minister Ali Larayedh's car in Brussels to make a similar point.

In the Netherlands, on July 17, the police arrested a 19-year-old girl for recruiting jihadis for Syria; she was released later. This is an indication of how jihad is attracting the next generation of immigrants, born and brought up in Europe. European jihadis are young and skilled in using modern technologies and are a people of tools and gadgets like smartphones, Facebook and Twitter. Unsurprisingly, intelligence agencies are on tenterhooks over jihadis with European passports travelling to Syria, with officials unable to stop them legally. In the post-9/11 years, European nations have taken many measures to contain Islamism, notable among them being the French ban on wearing of full-faced veils in public places, bar on building minarets in Switzerland, border screenings, and stringent counterterrorism laws. These measures have not been effective.

In April, a British study showed that jihadis from all parts of Europe – Albania, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden – were in Syria. A dozen Americans are also fighting in Syria. David Irvine of the Australian Security Intelligence



Organisation recently said that the number of Australian jihadis in Syria had doubled to 200 in just six months. Australians of Lebanese descent are now the largest group among Western jihadis fighting Syria's Shia regime, which is deemed infidel by them.

Although exact figures cannot be established, a July 28 report in *The New York Times*, citing classified intelligence, put the number of Western jihadis from Europe, North America and Australia at over 600, about 10 per cent of the 6,000 foreigners. Other estimates put the figure at 1,000. These numbers are rising. A July 24 report by the investigative website ProPublica quoted a French counterterror official as saying that between 2001 and 2010, about 50 French jihadis went to Afghanistan, whereas in just one year 135 went to Syria. Up to 300 jihadists travelled from Belgium. The bulk of foreign fighters in Syria are from Libya, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Ansar al-Sharia militants, who were released by Tunisia's new government which took over power after the 2011 uprising, are also finding their way to Syria.

From 2003 to 2009, Syria was the main training ground for al-Qaeda fighters in Iraq, according to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. In Syria, the total fighting force, comprising both jihadis and rebels, is estimated at a conservative 60,000 to a high of 100,000. This means that jihadis constitute roughly 10 per cent of it. The jihadis are part of Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Shaam (ISIL), both al-Qaeda affiliates (who later separated). On August 6, the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) deputy chief Michael Morell remarked that Syria's mix of jihad and civil war posed the greatest threat to the US. Unlike jihadis who fought in Afghanistan and Somalia, jihadis fighting in Syria will return with the experience of urban fighting, creating a new threat to the security of Europe, Australia and the US.

As a reaction to this threat, in the United Kingdom, where a British soldier was hacked to death by two jihadis this summer, the right-wing English Defence League took a leaf out of Hizbut Tahrir's book and held anti-Muslim protests. In Belgium, on a single day in April, the police raided 48 homes nationwide and detained six men for recruiting jihadis for Syria. In France, hundreds of Muslims engaged in violence with the police last month after a woman was fined for wearing a veil.

In Spain, six youth were arrested in June for jihadi propaganda on social media. In the German cities of Berlin, Bonn and Cologne, far-right groups like Pro Deutschland, Pro Kolen and Pro NRW protest in front of mosques and schools. These are random samples, the early sputtering of a time bomb. But there is no doubt that the Syrian jihad's battle lines are about to shift to Europe. In Syria, a protracted war suits

the jihadis who will train and return to Europe, the US and Australia, with each returning fighter capable of forming a nucleus of a few members. Within Europe's immigrant populations, they will find ideological and communitarian support.

The returnees could engage in terrorism; adopt legal means to train a new generation of Islamists who could fuel sharia movements; taunt European symbols of security and liberty, as Hizbut Tahrir members do when they publicly insult British soldiers returning from war zones. On their path to sharia, jihadis want to achieve the psychological war too. "The religious imperative for terrorism," writes analyst Bruce Hoffman in his book *Inside Terrorism*, "is the most important defining characteristic of terrorist activity today." It is certain that the Syrian jihad's blowback on Europe will be bigger than in the US, where people are better prepared to counter and delegitimise Islamists through civic action.

# Hatred of Jews in Europe, And Our Own

Ideas build societies. Ideas also kill people. When ideas coalesce into becoming an ideology, a pattern of killings becomes predictable. Societies host murderous ideologies. As an ideology targets a community, its members are shunned by neighbours, ridiculed and killed systematically over long periods, forced to emigrate and find new shelters. Anti-Semitism – or the prejudice and hate that targets Jews collectively and individually – is a type of racism now murdering Christians and Shia Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere. “The hate that begins with Jews,” wrote British rabbi Jonathan Sacks recently, “never ends with Jews.”

Before Islam was born, Jews lived in the land now called Saudi Arabia. Today there are no Jews in Saudi Arabia, eliminated completely. In the 1930s, more than half of the world's Jews lived in Europe. Eight decades later, the population of Jews in Europe has declined sharply. As estimated by Sergio Della Pergola of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 54 per cent of the 16.6 million Jews worldwide, or 9.5 million, lived in Europe in 1939. Europe's Jewish population fell to 3.8 million in 1945, the year the Allies won the World War II and discovered the Nazi genocide of Europe's Jews, of Holocaust in which six million Jews were killed in Hitler's gas chambers.

It was expected that attacks on Jews would decline after the Allies ushered in the path of democracy in Europe. But the population of Jews in post-War Europe continued to fall – from 3.8 million in 1945 to 3.2 million in 1960, 2.0 million in 1991, which further declined to 1.4 million in 2010, according to the Pew Research Center. In the European parts of the former USSR, there were 3.4 million Jews in 1939, declining to 310,000 now. The Pew notes: “Similar trends have occurred in Eastern European countries that were outside the USSR, including Poland, Hungary, Romania and several other nations” where the Jewish population fell from 4.7 million in 1939 to 100,000 now.

Some argue that the population of European Jews fell, especially in the early post-War decades, because Israel emerged as a shelter; but Israel was not the cause. The cause, in case of Arabia or Europe, is the hate Jews suffered through centuries. The current worry: There is upsurge in attacks on European Jews. The Community Security Trust, a charity, reports that anti-Semitic incidents in Britain, which is relatively safe, doubled to 1,168 last year. Amid mounting attacks, 7,000 Jews left France in 2014, doubling from the previous year. Sixty per cent of Jews in Sweden are afraid to identify themselves as Jews, says a European Union survey. In Greece, 69 per cent adults hold anti-Semitic views.

A Pew study recorded anti-Semitic attacks in 77 of 198 countries in 2013, but it was in 34 of 45 European countries that harassment of Jews was most alarming. This issue was highlighted after recent attacks by jihadists on a kosher supermarket in Paris and a Copenhagen synagogue. Synagogues, Jewish museums and supermarkets are targets. While there are periods in history when Muslim-Jewish relations were good, anti-Semitism is now encouraged in Muslim societies in Europe or elsewhere. Now the issue is the European nations' inability to check the rise of anti-Semitism – the reason why Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Jews to leave Europe amid the desecration of 400 Jewish graves in France.

Some analysts, especially those on the other side of morality, argue that the recent rise in attacks on European Jews is due to Israel's treatment of Palestinians. However, the attacks on Jews in Europe were much more when Israel did not exist. It is also historically an incorrect argument that Jews did not live in the region called Israel. Those who say that Jews should go back should be, for argument's sake, told this: they should go back to Saudi Arabia. In the present era, it is difficult to distinguish the hatred of Jews from a genuine criticism of Israel's policies as a state.

Since 1947, Pakistani Hindus and Christians have been targets of racism originating from Islam and the Pakistani constitution. In Morocco, which is lauded for good treatment of Jews, Shia Muslims are mistreated. In Islamic countries, Ahmadi Muslims are targeted. In 1984, it became difficult for Sikhs to find an inch of earth to hide in Delhi, the capital of India. In 2002, it became difficult for the Muslims of Gujarat to find shelters. In Bangladesh, life for Hindus has become miserable, as they are habitually hunted by soft Islamists. Murderous beliefs held by those who attacked *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris are taught by Barelvi clerics across India.

In a video on YouTube, Indian lawmaker Yogi Adityanath graces a meeting at Siddharth Nagar where speakers exhort: “The day this nation becomes a Hindu Rashtra, the day this nation will go into the hands of youth sanyasis like Yogi Adityanath, that day in this country the situation of Muslims will become the same as it is of Hindus in Pakistan. Today inside Pakistan, in temples, dharamshalas and mutts, sheep and goats are being kept. (In Indian mosques) nurseries of pigs will be opened.” Speeches continue: “And when this nation will become a Hindu Rashtra, the Muslim will be turned into a second class citizen. And when the Muslim will become the second class citizen, then his voting right will be snatched away.”

As thousands of people clap and Adityanath listens, another speaker issues a murderous call: “Today the need is to dig out the (corpses of Muslims’) mothers, sisters and daughters from graves and rape them.” As Indians, how we respond to such hate will determine our future. India is a free country. In this free country, you can wake up as Hindus, Muslims, Christians or others. This writer decided to wake up as an Indian. Depending on how you wake up each morning will decide how you will help to resolve this country’s problems, and in doing so determine if India emerges as a great nation, willing to take up a respectful place, in the comity of nations.

# United States's Counterterrorism Policies

On December 13, the European Court of Human Rights made a worrying observation in a case involving Khaled el-Masri, an innocent German citizen mistaken for an al-Qaeda terrorist, abducted and handed over to a CIA rendition team at a Macedonian airport, and later imprisoned in Afghanistan. El-Masri was, according to the court, “severely beaten, sodomised, shackled and hooded”. The ruling highlights unending concerns over the US’ transnational counterterrorism practice in the years after 9/11.

Over the past decade, the US has established capture/kill lists of terror suspects, carried out invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, trained 7,000 anti-terror officials in 60 countries, ordered raids by US Special Forces to kill terrorists, flown unmanned drones in foreign airspace to attack terrorist sanctuaries, operated secret prisons in eight countries, including in Europe, instituted biometric checks on its borders, prepared clandestine databases of foreign and US citizens travelling to and from America, tapped phones and emails of foreigners and Americans, conducted sting operations to capture lone-wolf al-Qaeda terrorists in America, and the like. As a result, counterterrorism has formed a comprehensive chunk of US foreign policy, leading to intelligence-sharing with many countries from Indonesia to Yemen and Djibouti.

The global scale of the war on terror is reflected in the fact that there have been – as US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted on September 11, 2011 – “120,000 arrests around the world in the last 10 years of terrorists, and 35,000 convictions”. These statistics reveal a large presence of terrorists worldwide, debunking the perception that militant groups are small units. Also, about 3,000 militants and civilians had been killed in drone strikes in the past decade, wrote journalist Greg Miller recently, noting that the US had reached “only a midpoint” in the global war on terror and that most policy experts expected it to last another decade.

Before the 9/11 attacks, the US was hesitant to target terrorists; even the 1998 missile attacks on Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan were ordered after much deliberation. After 9/11, ad hoc counterterrorism measures were implemented by the US, resulting in violations of civil liberties like in the case of Khaled el-Masri. The US has been criticised widely for its “extraordinary rendition” programme as part of which terrorists are imprisoned in CIA’s secret prisons abroad, for violating the sovereignty of nations by using pilotless drones to launch attacks in Pakistan and elsewhere, and for killing civilians and American citizens like al-Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki. Wartime powers for the war on terror were sanctioned on September 18, 2001, by the US Congress under its legislation “Authorisation for Use of Military Force”. Now, as the US enters the second decade of this war, it is also beginning for the first time to formalise a policy framework for counterterrorism.

It should be noted here that during the George W Bush presidency, the US began to reorient its foreign policy towards Asia, with India, Australia, Japan and others being seen as major US allies. Under Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton made her maiden trip to Asia, breaking a post-World War II tradition for the Secretary of State to visit Europe first. Last month, Obama’s trip to Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia was part of the same strategy to pivot US policy towards Asia, but in the midst of the visit, he was forced to dispatch Secretary Clinton to the Middle East after Israel responded against thousands of missiles fired by Hamas militants from Gaza.

Asked if the US focus on Asia was being diverted to the Middle East, US official Ben Rhodes said: “We believe that the United States can walk and chew gum at the same time.” During the past decade, one key issue that has forced the US to stay focused on the Middle East is Islamic terrorism. In the coming years, the US is likely to remain engaged there, as al-Qaeda affiliates flourish in Yemen, Syria, Libya, Egypt, Nigeria, Mali, Somalia and other countries. It is unsurprising that counterterrorism is expanding as a major component of US foreign policy, even to countries where there is no serious terror threat, notably Cambodia. The Pentagon plans to send hundreds of additional spies overseas.

John O Brennan, the chief counterterrorism adviser to Obama, is the architect of an emerging legal and administrative framework on counterterrorism being institutionalised by the US, according to an October 25 report in *The Washington Post*, which quoted Brennan as saying: “What we’re trying to do right now is to have a set of standards, a set of criteria, and have a decision-making process that will govern

our counterterrorism actions – we're talking about direct action, lethal action – so that irrespective of the venue where they're taking place, we have a high confidence that they're being done for the right reasons in the right way.” Two pillars of Brennan's policy surface here: a capture/kill list of terrorists and use of drone strikes. According to the report, this policy is defined by a “disposition matrix” – the designation of who should pull the trigger to kill a terrorist and under what legal authority.

As part of its new counterterrorism focus, the US is expanding its drone programme, investing \$1.4 billion for a drone base in Djibouti. The new policy, though belated, will allay concerns on counterterrorism, as Obama has already outlawed the CIA's use of torture and extraordinary rendition, though the US has continued a soft form of it by moving al-Qaeda inmates from Guantanamo to Third World countries on assurances that they will not be tortured. The United Nations also plans to establish an investigative unit early next year to examine the legality of drone strikes, according to Ben Emmerson, the UN special rapporteur on counterterrorism and human rights. Democracies are open societies and their people prosper in open environments.

In the face of newer kinds of terror threats, legislation may take time, but it is important that US' counterterrorism is seen as legitimate and legally accountable. The US military estimates that by 2030, drone-like machine capabilities will be intelligent enough to act without human intervention, Tom Malinowski of Human Rights Watch warned recently.



# Muslim Liberals Fighting Battle of Ideas with ISIS

**T**he Oxford dictionary defines barbarism as a condition of society characterised by “the collapse of civilisation”. In recent months, the jihadist group Islamic State, or ISIS, has carried out acts of savagery whose purpose seem to be to taunt the modern world, expose the uselessness of Western military might, and to reverse the secular global order back to the 7th century. The ISIS butchered hundreds of Iraq’s soldiers because they were Shias, beheaded Coptic Christians much like Saudi Arabia has been doing increasingly, poured acid over Christian women for not wearing the burqa, cut off the hands of thieves, lashed musicians and threw individuals from tall buildings as punishment for “homosexual” affairs. It captures and sells Yazidi women into sexual slavery.

News reports of such barbaric acts create an impression that Muslims there are generally silent about ISIS and other jihadist outfits. Muslims have been speaking out against ISIS loudly and at risk to their lives. This is borne out by articles and TV interviews of liberal Muslim writers and reformist clerics, translated from Arabic and published by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). Writing in Saudi daily *Al-Watan*, columnist Ali al-Sharimi criticised religious apologists who fail to condemn ISIS in no uncertain terms. “Have you ever heard of the ‘but’ gang?” he asked. “This gang contradicts itself: It supports (jihadists), but it doesn’t support; it opposes, but it doesn’t oppose; it condemns, but it doesn’t condemn.”

On Al-Iraqiya TV channel, former Iraqi lawmaker Ayad Jamal al-Din urged Islamic countries to evolve a civil state – as different from a sharia-based state – in which Muslims and non-Muslims could live together. He noted: “ISIS is based upon a certain ideology, upon a certain *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Unfortunately, what happened to the Yazidis... is to be found in the *fiqh* of Shias and Sunnis alike.” Abd al-Rahman al-Rashed, the director of Al-Arabiya TV, called for

fighting jihadists on the ideological plane, arguing that extremism cannot be eliminated by security measures. He said: "The extremist thought will end and will not be reborn for another 100 years if its sources of education, media and funding are dried out." Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi argued that for Muslim countries, "democracy is not a choice, but necessity".

Egypt's TV channel Al-Kahera Wal-Nas aired an interview of human rights activist Ahmad Harqan who left Islam because it was "a very harsh religion". He said what ISIS was now doing was its "physical manifestation". "The Quranic texts are crystal clear. When the Quran says 'strike their necks', it is very clear," he said, adding that "Boko Haram are also implementing this when they capture women." Lebanese scribe Hisham Melhem denounced jihadism, saying: "ISIS may be the reject of al-Qaeda, but like al-Qaeda, it is the illegitimate child of modern political Islam that grew and expanded in... an embracing environment" fed by conspiracy theories.

Khalaf Ahmad Al-Habtoor, an influential trader of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), questioned the West for its failure to act against ISIS and asked: "Where are the Arabs? This madness is playing out on our doorstep.... Forget the Arab world as an entity; it's disunited and in disarray! The Gulf Cooperation Council has the firepower and expertise to militarily intervene on its own." He suggested that governments could hire the Italian mafia to eliminate the ISIS. On Saudi TV channel Al-Majd, Saudi cleric Saad al-Shathri declared ISIS fighters as apostates, noting, "An oath of allegiance pledged to ISIS is null and void" and anyone who died while fighting ISIS is "a martyr".

After the January 7 attack on the French weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, Imam Tareq Yousef al-Masri delivered a Friday sermon in New York, where he named early Islamic jurists whose writings teach hate against other religions. "Let us admit something else. The majority of us Muslims hate the Christians," he told the worshippers, adding: "If you have cancer, it won't help you if I tell you that you have the flu." During a Friday sermon in Birmingham, Imam Abu Usamah At-Thahabi urged British Muslims to talk to their children so they are not trapped by ISIS. Imam Hassan Chalghoumi of Paris-based Drancy mosque, speaking on Al-Arabiya TV, noted that about 1,000 French jihadists did not go to Syria "as tourists" and argued for deterrent punishment. Saudi Arabia has a deterrence policy, he reminded, in the form of 15 years in prison.

Jordanian columnist Zaid Nabulsi called for recognising the problem with Islam, saying: "It is time to speak out. 'Islam is innocent' is

an incomplete sentence.” He reminded that 120 Islamic scholars had sent congratulatory letters to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Indian cleric Syed Salman Husaini Nadwi was among them. “To understand the crisis of Muslims today, one has to remember that Wahhabism exists in several textbooks containing the alleged sayings of the Prophet Muhammad,” said Nabulsi, urging clerics to reform Islamic texts. Iraqi columnist Aziz Al-Hajj gets at the crux of the problem: “It is not enough for some Muslim religious leader to appear on the (television) screens in France and condemn (the Paris attacks), for it is quite possible that, a few years ago, he was one of those who encouraged the attack on *Charlie Hebdo*.”

In Iraq where ISIS has risen, an identical force of pious Muslims known as Kharijites had emerged during the rule of Islam's fourth caliph, Hazrat Ali. Like ISIS, the Kharijites butchered Muslims in thousands by declaring them apostates. In those times, Islamic jurist Imam Abu Hanifa challenged Kharijite commander Zuhayr in the Iraqi city of Kufa on his interpretation of Islam's apostasy law. The punishments by ISIS are according to Islamic precedents. Even as liberal Muslims condemn ISIS, it is for a conscientious Islamic cleric to rise up and evolve a critique of Islam's criminal legal code if we are to see true progress towards the reform of Islam.

# Lone-Wolf Attacks in British Colonial India

On January 7, 2015, jihadi brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi attacked the offices of the satirical French weekly *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, killing eight journalists, two policemen, and two others, in revenge for the magazine's publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, which some Islamic groups had deemed blasphemous. The Paris killings reignited an international debate on the issue of Islam's blasphemy laws. Cherif and Said Kouachi were declared martyrs of Islam, not only by jihadi groups but also by Islamists – the softer version of armed jihadis – in several countries including India, where Islamic cleric Maulana Naseeruddin led a funeral prayer for the killers in Hyderabad on January 11.

Within a month, *Roznama Ummat*, a leading Urdu-language Pakistani daily, began publishing a series of articles titled "Martyrs of the Prophet's Honour" and examining the Islamist viewpoint on the blasphemy issue. This paper reviews the 43-part series, which focuses on historical incidents in the British-ruled undivided India during the 20th century and from Pakistan after its creation as an Islamic state in 1947.

In the Muslim understanding, a blasphemous act is not committed against the Prophet Muhammad alone but also against his family members and companions, such as the caliphs of Islam, or against the Quran. Any criticism of an act of the Prophet could be deemed blasphemous.

Of special mention here are Barelvi clerics in the Indian subcontinent, who teach the killing of anyone criticising the Prophet. Leading Barelvi clerics, such as the Pakistani-Canadian scholar Maulana Tahir-ul-Qadri, who is lauded in the West for issuing a fatwa (Islamic decree) against jihad and freely condemns jihadi attacks everywhere, would not condemn Malik Mumtaz Qadri, the elite security guard who in January 2011 assassinated Salman Taseer, the

governor of Punjab province, for advocating reforms in blasphemy law. Malik Mumtaz Qadri was lauded by Pakistani lawyers and defended in court by Khawaja Muhammad Sharif, the former chief justice of Lahore High Court, just as Pakistan founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah defended another assassin in the colonial era.

### **Lone-Wolf Jihadists in Colonial India**

As this review of the 43-part series in *Roznama Ummat* reveals, lone-wolf jihadis are not new to Muslim societies across the world and radicalisation is not a new phenomenon either. Indeed, an attack along the lines of the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre took place as early as 1929 in Lahore; the series gives extensive details of the radicalisation of the killer and how he became a Ghazi, someone who fights in an Islamic war. Of special note in this series is how *Roznama Ummat* praises the killers and incites the Muslim youth of today by narrating stories on how the killers of earlier days had visions and dreams in which the Prophet encouraged them.

This review also shows that Guantanamo-like offshore detention centres existed during the British rule and that the 2014 Fort Hood shooter Major Nidal Hasan was hardly the first radicalised Muslim soldier to attack his colleagues in the path of jihad; several Muslim soldiers in the British Indian army did kill non-Muslim soldiers for the same reason for which jihadis are fighting nowadays.

The role of mosques, fiery speeches by Islamic clerics and published literature on Islam have been central to the radicalisation of Muslim youth during British colonial times just as they were found to have been central to jihadi attacks in Boston, Toronto, Sydney, London and Paris over the past few years. It appears that the battle fought in the streets of Lahore in the 1920s was more bitter and bloody than the lone-wolf attacks in Western cities in contemporary times. This review shows how radicalisation was prevalent in the pre-1947 period, before Pakistan and India gained independence – an era in which there was no Twitter, Facebook or YouTube.

The newspaper does not identify the author of the articles. However, it appears from the first-person narrative of the final six articles – numbers 38 to 43 – that the author is Maulana Taj Mehmood, formerly the principal of M. C. High School Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) in Punjab province and an Islamic cleric who was one of the key leaders campaigning in 1953 in favour of the demand that Ahmadis be declared a non-Muslim minority in Pakistan's Constitution. The 1953 campaign

against Ahmadi Muslims led to violence and the imposition of military rule in Pakistan; later, in 1974, the Pakistani lawmakers enacted a piece of legislation declaring Ahmadi Muslims to be non-Muslims – perhaps the only time an entire community's religion was defined by the state.

### **The First Lone-Wolf Attack in India, December 1926**

The first article in the series, published on February 4, 2015, reviews the political situation that emerged after the 1857 war in which the British decisively defeated Indian kings and queens fighting under the leadership of Bahadurshah Zafar, the last Mughal ruler of Delhi, marking the end of nearly 1,000 years of Muslim rule in India. After defining the historical context, the author notes: "The Englishman was not a problem for the Hindus. Soon they [the Hindus] came under the umbrella of the new lords." While the Hindus progressed under the British rulers, the article argues, the Muslims "had not tasted slavery and therefore became insurgent" and their subjugation by the Hindus and the British began.

The second article, published the next day, argues that in such a historical context, Hindu leaders like Swami Shraddhanand (1856-1926) – of the Arya Samaj movement in Hinduism – "poisoned the atmosphere" and that "a campaign was launched against Islam and the Prophet of Islam [Muhammad]". It notes that the publication in 1899 by Hindu groups of *Satyarth Prakash* (The Light of Truth), an 800-page book authored by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, proved the "enmity against Islam". Its last edition was published in 1927 by Rajpal Publisher, Lahore. "From page 707 to 781, the reason-deficient author of this book ranted about the Quranic verses. This blind researcher did not make an ounce of effort to understand Islam. His mission itself was to practice a thought-out project against Islam," it notes, and accuses Rajpal, of Rajpal Publisher, of "being the soul behind this project" as testified in his preface to the Urdu edition of the book: "The price of the Urdu *Satyarth Prakash* was earlier 2 rupees. I have reduced it to 1.50 rupees."

The article further states that the British rulers supported the Hindus against Muslims, arguing: "The poison of enmity spread by Rajpal through the publication of *Satyarth Prakash* emboldened him further. He took an extremely dangerous step. This time, he targeted the world's most important, greatest and the most pious, the love of Allah, the personality of Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). With the aim of blaspheming the personality of the Prophet, he published an unpius book."

After lauding the Prophet for his contributions to humanity, the article goes on to note that there were protests against Rajpal Publisher but it made no difference, and that with its support, a former police employee, Munshi Ram, quit his job for a saintly life and came to be known as Swami Shraddhanand, who kept "publishing literature against Islam and the founder of Islam". Shraddhanand was assassinated on December 23, 1926. The article notes: "All praise be to Allah, a mujahid sent him to the Hell. His name was Qazi Abdur Rasheed (martyr)." Rasheed's radicalisation is not detailed by the author.

### **Charlie Hebdo-Like Attacker, Lahore, April 1929**

In the third article, published on February 6, the author notes that Rajpal was undeterred and published one more book against Islam. The author does not name the book, but it was called *Rangeela Rasool* (The Playboy Prophet) in Hindi and is available on the Internet. Ghazi Ilmuddin, born on December 4, 1908, came from an average Muslim family of Lahore, lived his life on sundry work and never even in his wildest dreams aspired to get a mention in history. "In those times, the mosque was the first school for the children of a locality," the author notes. Ilmuddin was sent by his father to a mosque to study the Quran. The fourth article in the series, published on February 7, is devoted to Ilmuddin's family background.

The next article, published on February 8, notes that Ilmuddin was an ordinary Muslim "unaware of the storm outside" or of Rajpal. Politics was in the air and anti-British slogans such as "Long Live Hindu-Muslim Unity", "Long Live Revolution", and "Death to the English Rule" were common. Rajpal continued to publish inflammatory literature. The article states that under pressure from Muslim groups, Rajpal was tried in court for fomenting religious hatred, but he was cleared of the charges. However, in this Hindu-Muslim legal conflict, two Muslims, Abdul Aziz and Allah Bakhsh, were convicted. Ilmuddin, an ordinary youth, became part of a religious movement, as Muslims led protests against Rajpal and Islamic clerics delivered speeches on Lahore's street corners. The article's discussion of Rajpal's life during this phase gives great insight into how radicalisation occurred in those times.

According to the article, on his way home from work one day, Rajpal found an Islamic cleric delivering a lecture and "listened to him for a long time". Then another speaker started speaking, in Punjabi, which was Ilmuddin's mother tongue. (Urdu was taught at madrassas, but he

had never gone to a madrasa.) The Punjabi speaker stated that Rajpal had published a book that blasphemed against the Prophet and used inappropriate language and that as a result "Rajpal is Wajib-ul-Qatl [eligible to be killed as per Shariah]".

The sixth article in the series, published on February 9, notes how Ilmuddin's life changed after that speech: "He was a simple Muslim, but knew the Kalima [the statement 'there is no deity but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger, which proclaim one's faith in Islam]. This was a great asset of life for him. He used to utter the names of Allah and the Prophet in one breath while reciting the Kalima. These were two crutches, two axes of his thought."

Ilmuddin's story has been taught to Pakistani children in laudatory terms over the past half a century and more. Since Ilmuddin was not educated, there was no space for Jihad bil Qalam (jihad by pen), the article observes. Considering it essential to punish Rajpal for the publication of the book, he adopted Jihad bil Saif (jihad by sword). Upon his return home, his father asked him where he had been, and he related to him the details of the cleric's speech and said that Rajpal had been declared Wajib-ul-Qatl. His father also approved of it. The article states: "It was as if Ilmuddin had now obtained the approval of his family as well, and the thought of ending [killing] the enemy gathered strength." In subsequent days, he discussed everything with his friend Shaida.

The article further speaks about Ilmuddin's discussions with friends – which are similar to the debate today involving conspiracy theories and the politics of the day. It states: "He would meet his friend Shaida, discuss Rajpal and his book. In those times, this was the topic of discussion everywhere on the streets and in bazaars. Whenever two friends met, they would talk about Rajpal's actions. The Englishman's partisanship, complete amnesty for criminals, and targeted violence and force against Muslims were discussed." Ilmuddin's father, says the article, was informed of his son's friendship with Shaida, who was considered a "loafer". Despite his father's rebuke, Ilmuddin did not abandon Shaida. "There was no information about who Rajpal was. Where is his office? What does he look like?" These questions of Ilmuddin were answered by another friend of Shaida, the article notes.

At this point the article here discusses how a suicide bomber in modern times would act in the days leading up to his bombing: "[Ilmuddin] could not reveal the matter fully. The storm that was in his heart, how could he discuss? The question was of life and death. He had adorned the shroud, but no one could see it... but the talk of killing



Rajpal began to be discussed generally in his home." It appears that the author is advising potential jihadi bombers on how to go about their mission.

One day, the article relates, a gathering was organised despite the clamping of Section 144 that prohibited gatherings of more than four people in riotous situations. Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari, an Islamic cleric and Amir-e-Shariat (the emir of the religious movement called Majlis Ahrar-ul-Islam), delivered a fiery speech: "Today, you have assembled here to sustain the honour and respect of the Muhammad of Arabia, the pride of prophets. Today, the honour of the one who gave dignity to the human race is in danger...."

Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari mentioned two leading clerics who were present: "Today, at the doors of [Islamic clerics] Mufti Kifayatullah and Ahmed Saeed stand the Mother of the Momineen [faithful Muslims] Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqa and the Mother of Momineen Khadija Al-Kubra [both wives of Muhammad] and they are telling you: 'We are your mothers; do you not know that the kuffar [infidels] have abused us?'" As the crowd wept, the cleric exhorted: "The state of your loves is such that in normal situations, you get killed; but do you not know that today the Great Prophet is writhing in the Green Dome [of Medina where Muhammad is buried]?"

The article notes the impact of the speech: "This speech set the entire city afire. In Lahore, congregations began to be organised everywhere against the author and the publisher of the ill-famed book [Rangeela Rasool] of the time." Additionally, a fatwa was issued by the Anjuman Khuddamuddin, a religious organisation, for the killing of Rajpal.

The article details how young people in both India (which included Pakistan at that time) and Afghanistan were radicalised by this. Khuda Bakhsh, a 30-year-old from Lahore, attempted to murder Rajpal, but only wounded him. A court sentenced Khuda Bakhsh for seven years in prison. On October 9, 1927, a trader from Afghanistan, Abdul Aziz, mistook a person outside Rajpal's office for Rajpal and attacked him, but the victim was Swami Satyanand; Aziz, too, was imprisoned for seven years.

It was Ilmuddin's turn now. The seventh article of the series, published on February 10, describes how his parents were thinking of marrying him in order to divert him from radical thoughts, but Ilmuddin apparently had a dream. The article states: "One pious man came and told him, 'Ilmuddin you are now sleeping; the enemies are engaged in activities that blaspheme against the honour of your

Prophet.' Early the next morning, he met with his friend Shaida, who had also had the same dream." The article says that the two young men could not decide which of them should kill Rajpal and decided to determine it by lot. They tossed their names in a hat and Ilmuddin's name came up in all three draws. The same dream recurred.

The eighth article, published on February 11, describes how after his complete radicalisation, on April 19, 1929, Ilmuddin – much as lone-wolf jihadis do in our time – bought a dagger from the market and marched to the office of Rajpal Publisher in Lahore. Ilmuddin was told, presumably by a vendor outside the office, that "Rajpal has not yet arrived. When he comes, the police will come for his security." Soon, Rajpal came in a car. The vendor pointed out to him saying that the one getting out of the car was Rajpal and added, "He published the book [*Rangeela Rasool*]."

The article states in detail thus: "Rajpal had returned from Hardwar [the Hindu holy city in present-day India], went to his office and sat in the chair, and was thinking of dialling the police to inform them about his arrival [in the city so that they could be deployed for his protection] when Ilmuddin entered the office. At that time, Rajpal's two servants were present there: Kedarnath was arranging books in the next room, while Bhagat Ram was standing next to Rajpal. Rajpal saw the youth of middle height entering his office, but could not think death had arrived so near him. In the blink of an eye, [Ilmuddin] took out his dagger, the hand lifted in the air and hit at Rajpal's liver; the dagger's edge entered the chest." Ilmuddin was later sentenced to death and hanged; hundreds of thousands of Muslims attended his funeral.

### **Murder in Court Room, Karachi, 1934**

The ninth article in the series, published on February 12, notes that after both British government officials and Hindu and Muslim leaders realised the necessity of a compromise to defuse the religious tensions in Lahore, editors and publishers from both the communities toned down their religious rhetoric. However, a number of Islamic leaders, including Muhammad Iqbal, the Islamist poet-philosopher of Pakistan, passed a resolution in favour of Ghazi Ilmuddin, while Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who would go on to found Pakistan, agreed to represent Ilmuddin in a High Court to appeal his death sentence.

The article states that although the High Court could not overturn the death sentence, Jinnah gave the following arguments in favour of Ilmuddin before the court: "1. Rajpal committed blasphemy against the

honour of the Prophet of Islam; he used bad language. The defendant's sentiments were hurt, and for that reason he was angered, and attacked. The crime was thrust upon him. 2. The defendant is 19-20 years old, and the death penalty does not apply to him."

After the hanging, Muslim leaders, among them Muhammad Iqbal, obtained Ilmuddin's body and offered a funeral prayer; some 600,000 people from various towns and villages came to Lahore, says the 10th article of series, published on February 13.

The next in the series, published on February 14, relates how Muhammad Iqbal, who is considered the ideological founder of Pakistan, praised Ilmuddin and Ghazi Abdul Qayyum; the latter had been sentenced to death and hanged for killing Nathu Ram, another Hindu who had published a book, *History of Islam*, that was deemed blasphemous of Muhammad. According to the article, Iqbal said in Punjabi: "We kept chattering while the son of a carpenter [Ilmuddin] won the race [to attain martyrdom]." *History of Islam*, published after the murder of Rajpal, was deemed to have been based on earlier books on Islam published by the Hindu leaders of the Arya Samaj.

Ghazi Qayyum murdered Nathu Ram in 1934 inside a courtroom in Karachi during a hearing. The article notes that when some Muslims went to Iqbal asking him to appeal against Qayyum's death sentence, Iqbal retorted: "Why, has Qayyum become weak [against the harshness of punishment]?" "No," the Muslim leaders responded, as if the debate was settled, and Iqbal did not appeal against the death sentence.

The entire purpose of the article, indeed, of *Roznama Ummat*, appears to be to praise modern-day jihadis and inspire today's Muslim youths on the path of jihadism. It goes on to laud Qayyum for supporting his entire family – an uncle, an old mother and a widowed sister – and despite being recently married to have taken the step to kill Nathu Ram. "He knew nothing other than Allah and his Prophet," the article notes. As is usual for Urdu newspapers, the entire discussion is sympathetic to the cause espoused by Ghazi Qayyum and Ghazi Ilmuddin.

Article 12 in the series, published on February 15, describes Ghazi Qayyum in the courtroom soon after the attack. O. Solvin, one of the British judges who witnessed the attack, asked Qayyum who was still holding the long knife in his hand: "Did you kill him?" Qayyum responded, "Yes, what else could I have done?" and, turning to the judge, pointed to the portrait of King George V in the courtroom and said: "If he had abused your king, what would have you done? If you had dignity, wouldn't you kill him?" Then Ghazi Qayyum looked at the body

of Nathu Ram and said: "This son of a pig committed blasphemy against the honour of my lord and the emperor of emperors, the Great Prophet [Muhammad], and his punishment was this." Later, when an inspector arrived and aimed a gun at him, Ghazi Qayyum said: "Don't fear, keep the revolver in its holster. I have done what I had to do, All Praise be to Allah."

The 13th installment in the series, published on February 16, says that a defence lawyer went to meet Ghazi Qayyum in prison but he was told by the defendant: "You do whatever you want to do, but do not get me to deny the killing. This will cause damage to my sentiment of jihad." The next article in the series, published the following day, describes how a judge sentenced him to death, despite arguments by a lawyer who cited the Quran and other local practices in his defence.

According to the 15th article, published on February 18, an effort was made to quietly bury Ghazi Qayyum, but his body was exhumed by a young man and was taken in a procession through the Muslim-majority city of Karachi. The police fired on the crowd because the procession violated Section 144, which banned gatherings; this resulted in several deaths.

### **The Lone-Wolf Jihadist from Sufi School**

The 16th installment in the series, published on February 19, focuses on Ghazi Murid Hussain. Murid Hussain, born in 1915, was the only son of the elderly Abdullah Khan, who lived in or at the village of Bhalla Shareef in Chakwal district of what is now Pakistan. Murid Hussain's father died when he was five, but he went on to study, first at a mosque and later at a school, graduating with a Matriculation degree, equivalent to Grade 10, which in those days was an achievement. The article notes that Murid Hussain was religious: "His habit of offering prayer in group was such that soon after hearing the words Allah-o-Akbar [in the call to prayer] he would get up and go to the mosque. Many times it happened that he left even meals midway after hearing Azan [the call to prayer] and went to the mosque."

The article states that Murid Hussain offered *baiyah* (oath of fealty) to a Sufi mystic Khwaja Abdul Aziz Chishti, a common practice adopted by all followers of a Sufi mystic. Around this time, Murid Hussain read a newspaper called *Zamindar*, in which "he would read news of enmity against Islam from Arya Samaj and other Hindu movements, parties and organisations regularly, and would feel hurt.... His sense of self-respect developed extreme antipathy towards bigoted

Hindus.... Following acts of blasphemy, he severed all links to Hindus, to the point that he stopped travelling on their buses." At the same time, in the region of Bhalla Shareef, Murid Hussain had Muslims open their own shops and got them to boycott Hindus socially.

In 1935, Murid Hussain, then 20, married. A few days after the wedding, according to the article, he was visited by the Prophet Muhammad in a dream, which changed his life altogether. One day in 1936, he read a story in the *Zamindar* newspaper about a Hindu doctor of Chakwal, Dr. Ram Gopal, who had named an animal after the Prophet. Muslims across India, still recovering from earlier instances of blasphemy by Hindu leaders, were agitated; protest statements by Muslim leaders were published regularly in newspapers.

On August 8, 1936, Murid Hussain procured a dagger and found his way to Dr. Ram Gopal's hospital, which was possibly a veterinary hospital. The 17th article, published on February 20, states, "Murid Hussain challenged the doctor; several people including Gopal's wife and children rushed to save him, but Hussain succeeded in sending the doctor to Hell with a single stroke of his dagger." Murid Hussain surrendered to the police on the condition that no Hindu policeman would touch him; he was hanged by a court order on September 24, 1937.

During Murid Hussain's imprisonment, a non-Muslim person was so impressed by him that he converted to Islam and took the name Ghulam Rasool, notes the 18th installment of the series, which was published on February 21.

Murid Hussain was buried in Ghazi Mahal, an area named for this purpose near Bhalla Shareef. Murid Hussain was the only one of the attackers discussed above who belonged to the Sufi school of Islamic thought, generally considered peaceful by liberal writers. Every year on the 18th of the Islamic month of Rajab, Muslims throng Ghazi Mahal to mark his day of martyrdom.

### **The Soldier Who Murdered Hindu Colleague**

The 18th installment in the *Roznama Ummat* series discusses Miyan Muhammad, born in Attock district in today's Pakistan. He attended school to the seventh grade and became a driver, but later joined the colonial era Indian Navy; he spent three years in prison for assaulting a man, and after his release, joined, at this father's plea, the 3/10 Baloch Regiment of the Indian Army in undivided India in 1935. This era, the article states, was known for Hindu-Muslim conflict over Hindu blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad.

During his military training in Karachi, Miyan Muhammad came to hear of stories of Muslims like Murid Hussain who had killed Hindus for insulting the Prophet. The 19th article in the series, published on February 28, notes that a historic moment arrived for Miyan Muhammad on May 16, 1937, when he was posted at a military camp in Karachi. Hindu and Muslim soldiers were engaged in gossip, and one group comprised two Hindus and a Muslim. One of the Hindu soldiers began reciting *naat*, a poem in honour of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Muslim soldiers gathered around him. The poem's stanzas ended with "Oh dear Muhammad". As he was reciting, the other Hindu soldier objected to it and said, "Take someone else's name [not Muhammad's]." This caused a storm in the hearts of the Muslim soldiers, including Miyan Muhammad, who threatened "to snatch the tongue" of the Hindu soldier if he said anything further and noted that his Hindu brother was privileged to utter the name of the Prophet. However, the Hindu soldier retorted that he would not be silent, telling Miyan Muhammad: "You do not have a right to reply from me."

The article relates that Miyan Muhammad warned the Hindu soldier: "From your unpious tongue, do not have the courage to utter the blasphemous sentences against the honour of our Prophet; otherwise, you will face death soon...." The Hindu soldier replied: "You do not have any right to stop me from this." After his duty was over, Miyan Muhammad went to his senior officer and told him about the incident, also noting that if the Hindu soldier did not apologise in writing, "it will become obligatory for me to sacrifice my life". The junior officer did not consider it serious; so Miyan Muhammad went to his barracks, changed his clothes, offered his night prayers and pondered.

That night, says the article, he went to the guard room, loaded his rifle and went to the military camp where the Hindu soldier was on duty. Aiming his rifle at him, Miyan Muhammad asked him: "Now tell me if I have or do not have the right to question you in the event of being guilty of blasphemy against my Prophet?" The Hindu soldier, Charan Das, immediately aimed his rifle at Miyan Muhammad, but he was too late, and he was shot 10 times. After confirming that the soldier was dead, Miyan Muhammad rang the danger bell, was arrested, and told his British officer: "Charan Das blasphemed against the honour of our Prophet and used bad words. I tried to stop him but he did not restrain himself. So, I killed him." The British commanding officer sent him for medical tests to find if he was under the influence of alcohol. The article notes that Miyan Muhammad did not change his statement before the doctor to escape conviction.

Installment 20 in the series, published on March 1, notes that Miyan Muhammad was tried in a military court in Madras, now Chennai, in India, where he was also kept in a mental hospital for monitoring while a military inquiry was under way. On September 23, 1937, he was sentenced to death, and was hanged.

### **The Soldier Who Stabbed His Sikh Officer**

Installment 21 of the series, published on March 2, sums up the stories of how various Hindus murdered for blasphemy had been engaged in enmity against Islam and Muslims. It especially notes the case of Swami Shraddhanand, perhaps the only non-Muslim leader to have delivered a speech on Hindu-Muslim unity from the Jama Masjid, or the Grand Mosque of Delhi, as generally non-Muslims are not permitted such activities from a mosque anywhere. The next in the series, published on March 3, further summarises the response of the Muslims and the reasons why they took the extreme steps. The 23rd, published on March 4, tells the reader: "A nation that does not remember its history finds it difficult to live its life as a strong and honourable nation in the world." It is clear that this series published by *Roznama Ummat* aims to prepare a new generation of Muslim youth for jihadi missions.

The 23rd article also tells the story of Babu Merajuddin, born in 1921 in the Lohari Gate area of Lahore. Merajuddin, whose early education was at a madrasa, is described as follows: "He had deep attachment with Islam from the beginning itself and was the owner of a very sensitive temperament." The article says that the decades of the 1920s and 1930s, during which Babu Merajuddin grew up, were characterised by "martyrdoms" of Muslim youths like Ghazi Ilmuddin in April 1929 and Hindu-Muslim conflicts; in one incident, in 1935 Sikhs demolished a mosque in the Shaheed Ganj area of Lahore. In 1940, Babu Merajuddin joined the colonial Indian Army and was posted in Lucknow, in present-day India, far from Lahore. The article notes: "He continued religious activities in the military. He gathered some Muslim soldiers with him and had a mosque established in the cantonment, and prayers began to be offered five times [daily]. Also, lessons [of Islamic teachings] were imparted at the mosque in the evenings."

Merajuddin's superior, Major Hardy Singh, was a Sikh officer who did not like Muslims and their religious activities in the military. In 1942, "Babu Merajuddin and his mates decided to sacrifice

[an animal] on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. When they were engaged in the ritual, Major Hardy Singh made fun of this sacred Muslim feast [commemorating Prophet Abraham's offer to Allah to sacrifice his son] and disrespected the meat of the sacrifice. Babu Merajuddin could not tolerate his bad conduct. He used the knife to stab that blasphemer to death."

Babu Merajuddin was convicted by a military court and sentenced to death, but top British officers converted it to life sentence to avoid riots in Lucknow, as India was on the way to a division on religious grounds; Pakistan was to be created just five years later, in 1947.

Babu Merajuddin was sent to prison in Sahiwal, in present-day Pakistan, where he continued his religious activities; officials decided to transfer him to a prison in Lahore. In the prison, he studied the Quran, Hadiths, and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and taught other inmates about the benefits of the Pakistan Movement, which argued that Hindus and Muslims could not live together and led to the creation of Pakistan. The article states: "He was released immediately after the independence of Pakistan [in 1947] because the crime he had been convicted of was not a crime, but a prayer."

After his release, Babu Merajuddin continued his religious activities and became part of the Khatm-e-Nabuwat movement, a doctrinal movement in Islam which declares Ahmadi Muslims to be non-Muslims for not believing that Muhammad is the last Prophet. The movement was led by leading scholars of the time such as Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari.

On March 6, 1952, Babu Merajuddin was entrusted by his spiritual leaders with the task of leading a procession against Ahmadis, forcing the police of the newly created Pakistan to fire to disperse the crowd; Merajuddin was killed along with others.

In 1974, the secular government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto outlawed Ahmadi Muslims, declaring them non-Muslims and forbidding them from the practices of Islam. The Khatm-e-Nabuwat movement is a strong religious movement in present-day Pakistan. Then and now, this movement has been led by Majlis Ahrar-ul-Islam, which is active across Pakistan and in the regions around New Delhi and Hyderabad in contemporary India.

### **The Jihadi Who Founded Taliban-Like Secret Organisation**

Installment 24 in the series, published on March 5, introduces Ghazi Manzoor Hussain, son of an Islamic cleric Maulana Abul Fazal Muhammad Karmuddin, a resident of Bheen village in Chakwal



district of modern-day Pakistan. The cleric-father belonged to the Sufi school of Islam and had offered *baiyah*, as is the practice in Sufism, to a disciple of Khwaja Shamsuddin, a Sufi mystic.

Born in 1904, Manzoor Hussain obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree, distinctly different from what is offered at a madrassa. He was a well-built young man and engaged in wrestling; the article quotes a writer as stating: "Ghazi Manzoor would attach his chest to a motor car and hold it, and no matter with what speed it was run, he would keep it stopped."

After he completed his mainstream education and ended wrestling activities, "the recitation of the Quran and studying Islamic history created a robust revolution in his heart. [He] developed revulsion towards the culture of Englishmen. [He] would not bear any influence of the English power. It became extremely difficult for him to live under the slavery of the foreigners." The article goes on to explain the radicalisation of Manzoor Hussain: "He first reformed himself and then shaped himself into the mould of shari'a. Since he had studied Arabic in college, it was easy for him to benefit from the Quran and Hadiths. From his late father, he had studied books of fiqh and Hadiths. He started preaching the religion. He was overcome by the sentiment of jihad bil Saif [jihad by the sword] and it became his longing to become a martyr in the path of Allah."

He would go on to found, in 1938, the Khuddam-e-Islam (Servants of Islam), a militant jihadi organisation like the present-day Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. The organisation published a pamphlet called *Khuddam-e-Islam Maidan-e-Amal Mein*, or "The Servants of Islam in The Field of Practice". The article observes: "By every account, it was a volunteer force. It used to regularly hold a parade [as in military training] and much emphasis was put on this point that the respected members should not reveal their organisational secrets. For this, formal *baiyats* were organised. Though the organisation could not reach far and wide, its influence in Chakwal and nearby villages was spread. It has also been established by research that Manzoor Hussain had friendly ties to Ghazi Murid Hussain" – the lone-wolf jihadi from the Sufi school.

In 1941, Khem Chand, a Hindu believed to have been related to Rajpal who was murdered by Ghazi Ilmuddin, was posted by the British government of the day as a sub-divisional officer (SDO) at Dohman near Chakwal. The article does not give details, but states that Khem Chand was in the habit of making blasphemous statements against the Prophet. Manzoor Hussain, accompanied by his friend Abdul Aziz, went to the residence of Khem Chand in the night and shot him dead as

his wife slept next to him. "They did not do anything to her, as she was innocent. While leaving, however, they said that 'we have taken revenge for the blasphemy of the Prophet, and the friends of Ghazi Murid Hussain are alive to meet against the enemies of Islam.'" This establishes that Manzoor Hussain was inspired by earlier attackers such as Murid Hussain.

Later, Manzoor Hussain's father would write about how he was killed: "He was sleeping sweetly with his two friends under a tree. An enemy shot them in that state. The three youths were martyred." His brother later reported that Manzoor Hussain had not told his father of their plan to kill Khem Chand. It is not clear why Manzoor Hussain, like his several predecessors who had killed blasphemers earlier and had surrendered to the authorities, did not follow the same path. According to another interpretation in the article, Manzoor Hussain and his friends were pursued by policemen and were shot dead in 1944.

### **The Man Who Beheaded an Ahmadi Preacher**

The 25th article of the series, published on March 6, introduces a new subject: Ahmadi Muslims. It should be noted that Ahmadi Muslims are accused by mainstream Islamic clerics of not believing that Muhammad is the last prophet of Islam. Under pressure from such Islamic scholars, in 1974 the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto passed a law declaring that Ahmadis are not Muslims. From that time on, it has become difficult for Ahmadis to call themselves Muslims in Pakistan, and Pakistanis too are forbidden from describing them as Muslims.

The article describes the mid-1960s story of Abdul Haq, an Ahmadi Muslim preacher who had arrived in Faiz Ganj region of the newly-created Pakistan's Sindh province from Amritsar in present-day India. The article accuses Abdul Haq of engaging in anti-Islamic activities and wearing a ring on his finger which had engraved on it, "Abdul Haq Nabiullah" – Abdul Haq is the prophet of Allah. Abdul Haq is also accused of engaging in *munazira* – the practice of Islamic clerics from rival schools appearing at a public debate on issues of doctrinal differences between them.

Abdul Haq engaged in such a debate with Maulana Lal Hussain Akhtar, a former Ahmadi who is described as a "representative of Muslims" in the *munazira* and who had previously studied under Muhammad Ali, the head of the Lahori group of Ahmadi Muslims. The article lashes out at Abdul Haq for blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad, but does not give details; it does note that Muslims were very angry and sad so much so that he had to flee after the debate.

Abdul Haq would be later shot dead by Alhaj Muhammad Manik, 54, who was preparing for his eighth Hajj, or annual pilgrimage to Mecca. According to the article, Muhammad Manik had just returned from a preaching tour of the Tablighi Jamaat to Balochistan, the Tablighi Jamaat being a revivalist movement in Islam headquartered in Delhi. Upon his arrival home, Manik's elderly mother told him: "Son, I would not forgive you my milk [it is common practice to seek forgiveness/pardon for mother's milk] that while you are [alive] such people are present who commit blasphemy against the honour of our Prophet Muhammad...." The 26th article in the series, dated March 7, says how Muhammad Manik was pained and sought details of Abdul Haq's blasphemous acts.

On December 21, 1966, Manik shot Abdul Haq dead as he was issuing instructions to his workers in an orchard. Muhammad Manik described his action thus: "I had a revolver and a small knife. I reached the orchard when Abdul Haq arrived to issue directions to Qadiani [a pejorative term used against Ahmadi Muslims] workers. As I was lost in thought, a voice came from somewhere: 'O despicable person, what are you waiting for? Deriving courage from faith, why don't you hand him over to fire?'" According to the article, Haq was not instantly killed by the bullet, but the killer sat on his chest, took out his knife and beheaded him in the following manner: "When the accursed man's head was separated, [I] cut his tongue and cleaved out his jaws. The finger which he used to point when talking, [I] separated it too and threw it far away...."

Here, the article is not only laudatory but the author uses the first person, to incite readers: "My tongue is spontaneously uttering this sentence that '[a] Haji Manik will always continue to send blasphemers of my Prophet to conclusion [i.e. to death]'".

The article says that Haji Manik went to the mosque, washed himself, offered prayers of thanks to Allah, recited the Quran, and was happy when policemen handcuffed him. Police records cited in the article give another version of the murder, however – that he had misled the Ahmadi preacher to his mango orchard saying he wanted to buy mangoes.

### **Leniency of Courts And Cops Towards Jihadists**

The interesting part of Muhammad Manik's story, which took place in the mid-1960s, is why he was treated the way he was by the police, prison officials and courts, and therefore it also sheds light on how and

why the Taliban and other jihadis find sympathy in Pakistani society today. It will be interesting here to note that how Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, the mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, enjoys a life of luxury in a Pakistani jail. A report in the Lahore-based *Daily Times* of March 2, 2015, observes: "[Lakhvi and six of his mates] have the jailer's permission to have a television, mobile phones and access to Internet, as well as dozens of visitors a day.... [Lakhvi] can receive any number of guests, any time of day or night, seven days a week." Lakhvi even fathered a child during his stay in the prison.

After Muhammad Manik was arrested, the article in *Roznama Ummat* says, the wife of the arresting policeman had a dream: "The Prophet Muhammad came in the dream. He told her: A guest of mine has arrived in the prison; spare no effort in serving him." Her house, the article adds, filled with the fragrance of perfume. According to the next article, published on March 8, her husband began acting as a servant to Muhammad Manik as the police investigation was under way. The article notes, praising Manik: "It was not a prison. It was a reward. Unmindful of worldly complexities, he would engage in prayer...." Manik was asked by a policeman about how he killed Abdul Haq at his advanced age; in response, says the article, Manik narrated a story relating to Prophet Muhammad: "An elderly companion had the longing to sacrifice his life in the path of Allah. The Prophet gave him a bone with sharp corner, and he reached the Truth [i.e. died] while sending infidels to hell."

Following the police investigation, Muhammad Manik was sent to prison in Khairpur, Sindh. The article notes that a Syed, or someone who traces his lineage to the Prophet Muhammad, who lives next to the prison, said: "The Prophet Muhammad visited a female [of the house in a dream]. He said, 'Daughter, from this evening a guard of my respect and honour is imprisoned in the jail. People know him by the name of Haji Manik. Ensure that he has no difficulty in getting food.'" In prison, good food began to be supplied to Muhammad Manik. The article praises how Muhammad Ali Abdur Rahman, the judge of the local court, framed questions in order to save Manik. "What was the manner of blasphemous act by the murdered?" he asked Manik, knowing that Manik would not be able to answer because then he himself would be guilty of blasphemy. Manik simply said: "How can I utter from my tongue the words I do not even like to hear?"

After months of hearing, on April 20, 1968, the judge sentenced him to three years in prison. Although Manik acknowledged his role in the killing, the sentence was extremely lenient and obviously Manik did not

appeal against it. However, Ahmadi Muslims did appeal against the sentence in the Sindh High Court, but the judge dismissed the appeal without much discussion.

The 28th article, published on March 9, explains how Muhammad Manik spent his three years in prison: "The reality is that during the hearing of the case itself, his popularity had spread far and wide. At the time of hearing, people would throng the courtroom just to have a *ziyarat* [religious visit/glimpse] of Ghazi sahab [Manik]. During his prison term, thousands of people visited him. Sufi mystic Sahibzada Mahmood Asad of the Khanqah-e-Aaliya, Balichi Shareef, would visit him." Asad's visit demolishes the argument that Sufism represents a moderate school of Barelvi Islam. According to the article, Sahibzada Mahmood Asad would tell his followers: "The Prophet Muhammad has a special benevolent eye on Ghazi sahab [Manik]. A time will come when people will take pride that I visited him [in jail]."

After his release, Muhammad Manik was brought home in a procession attended by thousands of people. In the days following his release, senior prison and police officials held special dinners in his honour, says the next article in the *Roznama Ummat* series. Manik died on October 2, 1983, attesting to the fact that while the British ruled, such killers were sentenced to death, but that after the creation of Pakistan, Muslim judges and police officers ensured that they were not punished but honoured. Muhammad Manik, who had performed the Hajj seven times, would recall: "[After the killing of the Ahmadi preacher] there was not a night in which the Emperor of Madina [Prophet Muhammad] did not visit [me in my dream]. Every day, every night, [I] would enjoy the taste of proximity [to the Prophet]...."

### **Jihadist Imprisoned in Guantanamo-Like Prison in Andaman**

Installment 29 in the series, published on March 10, discusses the mid-1930s but is written with the aim of radicalising Muslim youth. Sometime in the 1930s, in a town called Raja Jang near Lahore, a powerful Sikh leader Veda Singh banned the azan, the call to prayer five times a day, and was killed by Ghazi Ahmad Deen. The author of the article notes that Zafar Iqbal, the biographer of Ghazi Ilmuddin, once told him that Ahmad Deen was alive and living in Raiwind, an area of Lahore, and notes: "After sunset, we started for Raiwind. And when I was knocking on the door of Ghazi Ahmad Deen, the voices of Allah-o-Akbar [Allah is Great] that arise from mosques reached my ears. The town of Raja Jang has been inhabited for approximately 500 years. Fifty

years ago [when Veda Singh was killed], there were more Muslims there than Sikhs. Despite this, Veda Singh banned the azan because his ancestors had continued this practice [of banning the azan] and it had been more than 140 years since the people of this town had heard it."

The article then switches to the first person, in the voice of Ghazi Ahmad Deen (in Urdu journalism, sentences switch from third person to first person and back without any use of quotation marks). Ghazi Ahmad Deen states that while attending the funeral of Ghazi Ilmuddin, who had killed Rajpal on April 19, 1929, he had wished: "Oh Allah, honour me too with this status [of Ilmuddin as martyr]." Ghazi Ahmad Deen went to Sufi mystic Miyan Sher Muhammad of Sharaqpur Shareef, who told his followers as if he knew Deen had come for the extraordinary work of protecting the honour of the Prophet: "Today, a special person of mine has come. He will be well looked after." Ghazi Ahmad Deen says he felt spiritually calm. After the Sufi mystic died, he went again to Sharaqpur Shareef, where he prayed: "Oh Allah, may I not return until I get a message." He dozed off.

Here two things become clear: One, Sufism also inspires jihadis; and two, dreams are a means by which the devout get inspired. In his dream, Ghazi Ahmad Deen saw three Sikhs travelling from Raiwind to Raja Jang town, and heard a spiritual power tell him: "Veda Singh is in the middle." This dream would later help Ghazi Ahmad Deen identify Veda Singh so that he could kill him. In the article, Ghazi Ahmad Deen then launches a lengthy tale of how he went to Raja Jang and stayed with his friend Imamuddin anonymously, and although undertaking two extremely risky missions of entering the haveli (palace) of Veda Singh in the presence of guards, how he could not identify him and kill. The purpose of narrating this failure seems to be to stress the importance of the dream he had earlier and to teach readers who are potential jihadis on how to go about such missions.

At this point, his friend Imamuddin tells him that Deva Singh is to leave the town for Raiwind. Ghazi Ahmad Deen follows him to Raiwind but does not get a chance to kill him. It is only on his return journey that Ghazi Ahmad Deen succeeds in killing him, on February 18, 1938: "Suddenly, a map emerged before my eyes showing Veda Singh going to Raja Jang from Raiwind [as I had seen previously in my dream]." The miracle of the dream was such that two of Veda Singh's bodyguards went to a factory on the way back, leaving him alone for a few moments. At this point, Ghazi Ahmad Deen walked up to him, asked him if he was the same Veda Singh who had banned the azan; as soon as it was confirmed, Deen says he stabbed Veda Singh. As was the practice

of such religious killers in those times, Ghazi Ahmad Deen went to the police station and surrendered and although a sympathetic policeman asked him to flee he refused to do so.

Veda Singh's son came to the police station and was horrified to see that Ghazi Ahmad Deen was being treated like a guest. Later, a Muslim judge sentenced him to 14 years' imprisonment. "Six months later, the sessions [local court] judge came to me, apologised, and gave me a Quran and 700 rupees," he says, revealing how the culture of the Pakistani police and judges protecting Islamist killers survives to this day.

Later, Ghazi Ahmad Deen was sent to Kaala Paani ("Black Water"), an open prison established by the British in the Andaman Islands, which is today an offshore territory of India. In 1945, two years before India's independence, Ghazi Ahmad Deen returned from Kaala Paani after the Japanese bombed the islands.

### **16-Year-Old Radicalised By a Village Cleric**

In 1946, 16-year-old Mehr Mohammad Amin murdered Ram Das, a Hindu moneylender accused of blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad. The incident took place in Peester Teekh village, somewhere near Chakwal in present-day Pakistan. It appears that the author of these articles visited Mehr Mohammad Amin in 2000, when Amin was 70. The 30th article, published on March 11, states that Amin told the writer: "[Ram Das] would make interest-bearing loans to Muslims. If there was a delay in repaying the interest, he would abuse and vilify them. Sometimes Ram Das would come drunk to collect the interest, and when he did not receive it, would take the Muslims' daughters to his place. Ram Das' atrocities reached their extreme when he named his animals after the members of the house of the Prophet Muhammad. He would call his animals by these names publicly."

Amin, also known as Baba Jee, added that local cleric Maulana Muhammad Deen had told villagers about Ram Das' actions, urging them, "It is our duty to murder him. Who is the lucky one who will perform this duty and achieve the status of Ghazi [martyr]?" Deen delivered this speech at the funeral of Amin's uncle. So, Amin and his cousin Chaudhry Muhammad Azam took an axe and headed out: "[Our] hearts were beating with love for the Prophet Muhammad, and jihadi steps were leaving the distance behind. Midway we met an old man, Chaudhry Laal Khan. We said Salaam, but he did not answer. When we asked him why [he did not answer], he said, 'In your area,

there is no Muslim [worth his name] who could kill the blasphemer Ram Das. Despite being old, I have come from Chakwal to kill him." When the two cousins reached his home and called out for Ram Das, his dogs began barking. Ram Das, calling them by the names of Prophet Muhammad's relatives, told them to be quiet. Amin says he shouted Allah-o-Akbar and struck Ram Das in the head with his axe. His wife came to fight back, but she too was killed by Amin's cousin.

According to the article, Mehr Mohammad Amin and his brother did not flee; Hindus gathered around them immediately, but they explained that they had avenged an act of blasphemy and began shouting Allah-o-Akbar. They were soon joined by hundreds of Muslims. "After being arrested [by a Muslim police officer], we were passing through the bazaar on foot. At every Hindu shop, we two cousins would stop and shout slogans. Although they were large in number, the Hindus would leave their shops and run away," Mehr Mohammad Amin says, adding that when the two cousins went to the court, they demanded: "We [must] be given the death sentence. We have to go to our lord [the Prophet Muhammad]." Because Mehr Mohammad Amin was a juvenile, he was freed, but his cousin Muhammad Azam was sentenced to death, and his hanging was set for August 18, 1947.

"Inside the jail, mujahid Muhammad Azam's joys were worth seeing. His laughing and smiling face would shame the moon. The longing for love and for meeting the Prophet had him in a trance," Mehr Mohammad Amin says. However, three days before the hanging, Pakistan was created, on August 14, 1947; all death sentences were commuted to life sentences, and long sentences to short prison terms. Ultimately, Muhammad Azam too was freed.

At this point in the narration, the author prompts Amin: "During the imprisonment, did any figure visit you in dreams?" Amin responds: "When I was in the black room of the jail, a respected woman in a shroud emerged from a house and told me, 'Well done, well done'... and she told me that I and my cousin would be freed. My heart cried out that this woman is Fatima [the daughter of the Prophet]...." The author notes that when he left Amin, "he was smiling fulsomely, as if he has just now finished murdering Ram Das...."

### **The Youth Who Killed a British School Headmistress, Bhopal**

The next five articles in the series – numbers 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35, published on March 12-16 – focus on the era of the Prophet Muhammad when the killing of his rivals who did not accept him as a prophet or of



those who blasphemed against him or left Islam was ordered. The writer's purpose in focusing on the era of Muhammad seems to be to radicalise Muslim men and women by instilling a sense of courage displayed by their predecessors who knowingly chose a path of martyrdom in Islam's early wars.

Article no. 36, published on March 17, introduces Ghazi Muhammad Hanif, a Muslim youth who killed a British school headmistress in the town of Bhopal, in Madhya Pradesh in present-day India. The article states that the Englishwoman, the principal of a girls' high school, had had pages of the Quran thrown into the garbage "under a thought-out scheme" or conspiracy and that when Muslims opposed this, she used inappropriate words against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. According to the article, Muhammad Hanif, a butcher by profession, stopped her one day and demanded that she apologise to the Muslims of Bhopal, and killed her when she refused to do so. He then went to a police station and surrendered. Muhammad Hanif was hanged. It is not certain when this incident took place, but it appears to have been during the British rule.

In another village, near Sargodha in Pakistan, a Muslim youth killed his Hindu classmate. "The Hindu student committed blasphemy against the Prophet and the Muslim mujahid killed him under a thought-out plan. [He] was saved from judicial punishment due to his young age," the article notes, but no further details are given. It also mentions without much detail another such incident, at a village near Bahauddin in Pakistan, where a Sikh who blasphemed was killed by Ghazi Muhammad Azam. In another incident, in a village in Jhelum, in present-day Pakistan, Muslims were conducting a procession to mark Eid Milad, the Prophet's birthday, and when the procession reached a locality of Sikhs, a local Sikh leader Eppl Singh taunted the participants, the article states, and a Muslim youth Ghazi Ghulam Muhammad ("Servant of Muhammad") killed him, was arrested, convicted and hanged.

This article notes another incident from 1946, a year before the creation of Pakistan, when Hindus from the Jan Sangh organisation held a large meeting of about 10,000 people at Pakka Qila in Hyderabad, Sindh. This was a period of great Hindu-Muslim conflicts in the Indian subcontinent which within the year would be divided into Pakistan and India. According to the article, Hindu leaders such as Neenu Maharaj made speeches blaspheming against Muhammad at the meeting, and some 25 Muslim youths planned an attack.

The Muslim youths, shouting Allah-o-Akbar, launched the attack at Pakka Qila, leading to a stampede during which Abdul Khaliq Qureshi (his surname denoting the profession of butchers) came face to face with Neenu Maharaj and stabbed him in the abdomen with a dagger. Neenu Maharaj died on the spot. According to the article, Muslims who took part in the attack included Haji Muhammad Bakhsh, Allah Wrayo Shaidi, Muhammad Ali Shaidi, Ali Murad Shaidi, Lakkha Navalo, Siddiq Godz, Nabi Bakhsh, Muhar Mohammad, Allah Dano Shaidi, Rahim Bakhsh Ibrahim Hajjam ("barber"), Abdul Khaliq Qureshi, and Lala Majeed Peestervi.

### **32 Muslims Who Partook of Martyrdom, 1974**

Chaudhry Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, an internationally known jurist, was the first foreign minister of the newly created Pakistan, serving from 1947 to 1954. He was an Ahmadi Muslim. On July 18, 1952, Muslims protested against him in the city of Multan, arguing that as an Ahmadi he should not serve as a leader of the Pakistani government. To disperse the crowd, inspector Ghulam Mustafa ordered the police to open fire, killing six protesters. "It was the people's view" that Ghulam Mustafa was an Ahmadi, notes the 36th article in *Roznama Ummat*, which was published on March 17; it is not certain whether he actually was.

From the article, it does not appear that the police inspector was targeted and killed, but what is interesting is that the protesters who died in the police shooting are described as "martyrs" of Islam for protesting against foreign minister Khan, who, in the opinion of the writer and Muslims, was not a Muslim. There were protests across Pakistan, and in a meeting seven days later on July 25, 1952, Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari spoke of the martyrdom of those who had died, noting that when Musailma Kazzab had announced that he was a prophet in defiance of Muhammad's prophethood, Abu Bakr, the Prophet's companion, did not engage in a debate but sacrificed over 7,000 reciters of the Quran in the fighting against Musailma Kazzab. The fighting settled that Muhammad was the Prophet and that prophethood stopped with him, that is, he was the final prophet. The article profusely praises those who died in the police shooting: "May Allah's blessings be upon you, oh martyrs of the Prophet's honour...."

The argument that the prophethood ended with Muhammad is now defended as part of the Khatm-e-Nabuwat (the end of prophethood) movement in Pakistan, first led by Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari and now led by numerous Islamic clerics across Pakistan. It is one of the Islamist

movements whose financial backers are not known, though it is known that its leaders are deeply connected to Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. This movement targets Ahmadi Muslims who are accused of not believing that Muhammad was the last prophet though there are minute doctrinal differences as well as meeting points between the rival groups regarding this argument.

According to the 37th article in the series, published on March 18: "In the Khatm-e-Nabuwwat movement of 1974 [when Ahmadi Muslims were declared non-Muslims by Pakistan], 33 lovers of the Light of Prophethood [Muhammad] partook of the drink of martyrdom. Maulana Shamsuddin was among them." Born in 1945, Maulana Shamsuddin studied under leading Islamic scholars. In 1969, when he was enrolled at Madrassa Nusrat-ul-Uloom in the Pakistani town of Gujranwala, some youths held a meeting at the madrassa and decided to establish an organisation "to awaken religious feelings among the country's students and for practical struggle for an Islamic system in the country," the article notes. An organisation was thus established and conveners for different provinces were appointed. It observes: "In the meeting when the name of Balochistan province was mentioned, a youth of the madrassa from whose forehead fountains of bravery and determination sprung, stood up and said, 'I am ready to shoulder the responsibility of Balochistan.'" This youth was Maulana Shamsuddin, who ensured the "funeral of mirzaiyat" – a pejorative term for the beliefs of Ahmadi Muslims, in Balochistan, the article notes.

The article goes on to accuse Ahmadi Muslims of publishing a distorted version of the Quran and lauds Maulana Shamsuddin for campaigning against them. Maulana Shamsuddin was found dead in mysterious circumstances under a train at Zhob in Balochistan; the article blames his death on the Pakistani government of the day. "This is how due to the mischief of the government Maulana Shamsuddin partook of the drink of martyrdom on March 13, 1974. When [his body was] brought home, family members, relatives and friends congratulated [each other] on his martyrdom," it notes.

It should be noted that it is normal practice in Pakistani society to congratulate friends and relatives when a youth is killed in the path of jihad, for example while fighting in Kashmir.

### **Muslims in the 1953 Khatm-e-Nabuwwat Protests**

According to the 38th article, published on March 19, an incident involving Ahmadis took place on October 26, 1984. During this time, new executive orders issued by the then military dictator of Pakistan,

General Zia-ul-Haq, barred Ahmadis from uttering Islamic words and from using symbols of Islam. In the town of Sahiwal, Hafiz Bashir Ahmad of Jamia Rasheedia madrassa was informed that Ahmadis were saying the azan, the call to Islamic prayer. One morning, Hafiz Bashir Ahmad and a student Azhar Rafeeq went to the worship place of Ahmadis and were killed while peering into the Ahmadi mosque. The article describes both as martyrs. Their killings led to protests in different parts of Pakistan.

The article also describes Sardar Ahmad Khan of a town called Kharian in Punjab province as a martyr for being killed allegedly by Ahmadi Muslims as he and some other youths collected hides of animals sacrificed during Eid Al-Adha. In another incident, in the town of Sukkur in Sindh province, Ahmadis reportedly threw bombs as Fajr, the pre-dawn prayer, was under way at the city's Jama Masjid Manzilgah. Two men, Hafiz Manzoor Ahmad and Malik Noor Ahmad, were killed on the spot, and both are described in the article as martyrs. It appears that the target of the attackers was the mosque leader, Maulana Muhammad Murad, who was wounded. After describing the deaths that resulted in the fight against Ahmadi Muslims as martyrdoms, the article returns to 1953, when the Khatm-e-Nabuwwat movement turned bloody.

Khwaja Nazimuddin was Pakistan's prime minister from 1951 to 1953. He was Governor General of Pakistan after Muhammad Ali Jinnah during a period when Pakistani leaders were struggling to prolong their individual hold on power and delaying the writing of a constitution in the process. However, the Basic Principles Committee (BCP), which was set up to create a constitution, gave its report during Khwaja Nazimuddin's tenure.

According to the 38th article, the BCP report did not consider Ahmadis as non-Muslims. "The sad point was that the Qadianis [pejorative term for Ahmadis] were included among Muslims, though Muslims had already demanded that the mirzais [pejorative term for Ahmadis] not be included among Muslims," it notes.

On December 26-28, 1952, Islamic clerics held a Khatm-e-Nabuwwat (end of prophethood) conference in the town of Chiniot. The article states that Mirza Bashiruddin Mehmood, the leader of Ahmadis whose movement had its main headquarters in the town of Rabwah, had already said that "before the end of 1952 the situation needs to be such that all enemies surrender at our feet". At the Khatm-e-Nabuwwat conference in Chiniot, Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari challenged Mirza Bashiruddin Mehmood: "Oh Mirza Mehmood, 1952 was yours, and now

1953 will be mine." In Chiniot, Islamic leaders held a secret meeting and decided that they needed to do something because, as per the BPC report, Ahmadis "were classified among Muslims in a country [Pakistan] obtained in the name of Allah and his Prophet [Muhammad]."

After another meeting in January 1953 in Karachi, the capital of the newly created Pakistan, these Islamic leaders met with Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin and presented the following demands: Ahmadis must be declared a "non-Muslim minority" in the proposed Pakistani constitution; Sir Zafarullah Khan, "the Great Apostate", must be removed from the post of the country's foreign minister; Ahmadis must be removed from the country's top government positions, and more. According to the article, Islamic leaders warned in writing that if these demands were not met within a month, the Muslims of Pakistan would be forced to launch an action plan of their own. The Nazimuddin government did not accept the demands, which led to violent street protests in the name of the Khatm-e-Nabuwwat movement and police action against protesters – a precursor to the military rule in Pakistan, though the 1953 movement itself was crushed.

The 39th and 40th articles in the series, published on March 20 and 21 respectively, go into the details of how the protests turned violent due to manipulation by the police; the author's objective is to consider those who died in the path of the Khatm-e-Nabuwwat movement as martyrs.

The last three articles, 41 to 43, published on March 22-24, also focus in detail on the 1953 Khatm-e-Nabuwwat movement, in which the author describes his own prison term, how mothers urged their sons to fight so that they could call themselves mothers of martyrs, how Pakistani youths took bullets in their chests in defence of Islam, and how the Pakistani government leaders and their relatives who acted against the movement were avenged by Allah with road and air accidents, job losses and paralytic attacks.

# How to Combat Global Islamism

**T**he series of jihadist attacks by “lone wolves” – some call them stray dogs but both the terms are insults to animals – in London, Boston, Sydney and Paris illustrates the fact that modern democracies cannot take their freedom for granted. After World War II, democracies faced threats from armed communism. Seven decades on, democratic nations and their liberties are still threatened, this time by radical Islamism. It is a matter of time before Indian democracy came face to face with such threats, especially since the signs of radicalisation are emerging in many parts of India.

The January 7 attack on the French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* illustrates two points: first, democratic nations must put in place a counter-radicalisation strategy that integrates Muslim communities into the mainstream. Second, big powers must join hands and evolve a global strategy against the jihadist threat in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia and others. As of now, the Western powers are not engaging in developing a global strategy against Islamism because of the fear that they will be seen as anti-Islam.

However, the longer the West takes it to tackle this menace, the bigger it will become. It was indeed this realisation that forced the leaders of 40 countries, including the United Kingdom, Israel, Germany, Palestine, Jordan, Poland and Spain, to march hand in hand with the French president in Paris on January 11 to denounce the attackers of *Charlie Hebdo*.

Let us examine the second point to understand how the international system of states has become problematic. The modern nation-states – with sovereignty and non-interference in each other's affairs being their defining characteristics – emerged after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, an agreement which ended the Thirty Years War during which conflicts between the Protestant and the Catholic states had transformed into a war between the great powers.

While the newly emerging nation-states ended the war to the benefit of their peoples, they are now doing exactly the opposite. For example, the Pakistani nation-state crushes its people in Balochistan. The Sunni nation-state of Bahrain tramples upon its Shia majority. The Chinese nation-state suppresses its Muslim population in Xinjiang. Iraq suppresses the Kurds and Sunnis, while Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan allow persecution of their Shia minorities.

(Kashmir is not a good example because the people elect their government, can openly challenge the power of the Indian state and are about to overcome jihadist insurgency commissioned from outside.) The argument here is that the international state system anchored to the United Nations since World War II is failing to address the emerging problems caused by its member-states, notably the rise of global jihadism. The UN is paralysed. There is an urgent need to dismantle the UN and establish a new international state system and to evolve an international strategy to undermine global jihadism from within and without.

A global strategy must take into account the suppression by nation-states of people within their own borders as well as state support from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran and Pakistan to jihadist groups like Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Canadian-Pakistani writer Tarek Fatah has suggested that global extremism can be undermined from within by addressing the issues of Balochistan, Kurdistan, and Turkey's support of Muslim Brotherhood, among others.

If some Western countries are willing to recognise Palestine as a state despite the jihadist ideology of Hamas, there is no reason why the Kurds who have abided by the norms of civilised behaviour should not get Kurdistan.

To return to the first point, the need for a counter-radicalisation strategy, democratic states must evolve their own domestic policies to challenge radicalisation. Over the past year, India has witnessed worrying symptoms of radicalisation: Muslim youth posing for a group photograph in ISIS T-Shirts in Tamil Nadu, stickers in favour of ISIS displayed on cars in Kerala, and masked youth waving ISIS flags in Kashmir. On the toilet walls of a Mumbai airport, a passenger scribbled ISIS threats. In Jharkhand, someone deemed it fit to print "ISIS Pakistan" on T-Shirts. Many Muslim youth were detained in Kolkata, Bangalore, Mumbai and Hyderabad over ISIS links, and some youth from Mumbai went to Iraq too for jihad.

Sanjeev Dayal, Director General of Maharashtra Police, proposed a counter-radicalisation strategy, which argued for inclusive housing for Muslims, mainstreaming of madrassa education and dealing with perceived grievances of Muslims, among others. Dayal took inspiration from a Singaporean law that mandates mixed ownership in housing societies for Malays, Indians and the Chinese. The police chief also warned against online propaganda that radicalises Muslim youth.

All the suggestions are practical, but there is no short-cut to integrating Muslim communities, whether in France or in India. This is because Islam does not allow Muslims to fully integrate with local communities; as a system of ideas, Islam is designed to essentially separate Muslims from the practices of non-Muslims. In Dayal's state, this writer asked a Muslim man who has not gone to college: What do Urdu religious channels like Peace TV of televangelist Zakir Naik teach? His response: they teach us about Islam. Probed further as to what he and his family learnt from these channels, he explained: *wo hamein Islam ke saanchey mein dhalte hain* (they shape us into the mould of Islam).

Muslims everywhere will continue to separate themselves from the rest of society. Islam does not permit integration, despite which some Muslims do integrate. Nevertheless, attempts for reform must be made on an urgent basis. India needs to think seriously for the long term and evolve a 100-year strategy. Such a strategy must begin by getting all madrassas and mosques registered and their finances audited by local officials, a task unachievable if the same is not done for temples and churches; and revising madrassa syllabi from the primary classes to include – in addition to the teachings of the Quran, Hadiths and Islamic Studies – English and material sciences as well as a primer on need-blind subjects like liberal arts.





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*Author photo by Alan Howard, London*

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It does not happen every day that a student from a madrasa in a remote place in Bihar goes on to work in New Delhi, London and Washington. In the 1990s, I met Tufail Ahmad on the campus of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi and it is good to know that he has emerged as a voice of reason against mass orthodoxies of our times, as demonstrated in the essays and research papers in this book. This book is equally relevant for Islamic reformers and counterterrorism analysts.

– **Asif Jalal IPS**, senior police officer and author of  
*Thoughts for Young Minds*

This book helps the reader develop a sociological understanding of the ideology of jihad. In recent years, few experts have produced more knowledge and analysis of jihad than Tufail Ahmad. Many of the essays and research papers in this book are directly relevant for Pakistani readers. Ahmad suggests some concrete ideas to advance the cause of Islamic reformation in South Asia.

– **Arif Jamal**, author of *Call for Transnational Jihad: Lashkar-e-Taiba 1985-2014*

This book takes you a long way towards understanding the dangers India faces from Islamism within. Few understand as well as Tufail Ahmad how deeply Islamist radicalisation has seeped into Indian Muslim consciousness. It is a must read for Muslims. Among the many revelations in this book, the most appalling is how in the past century thousands of Muslims, including intellectuals and politicians, routinely extended support to lone-wolf killers of alleged blasphemers of Islam.

– **Sultan Shahin**, Indian Islamic reformer  
and Editor, *Newageislam.com*

I have watched Tufail Ahmad since he began working at the BBC a few months before 9/11. Through a series of essays in this book, he emerges as a perennial optimist, discussing jihadist terrorism. India's secular future lies in creating space for persecuted minorities in her neighbourhood. Ahmad's Twitter timeline shows that he is being compared to Socrates, Voltaire and Raja Ram Mohun Roy. This is a must-read book to understand the future of India's secularism.

– **Saqlain Imam**, veteran Pakistani journalist, London



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